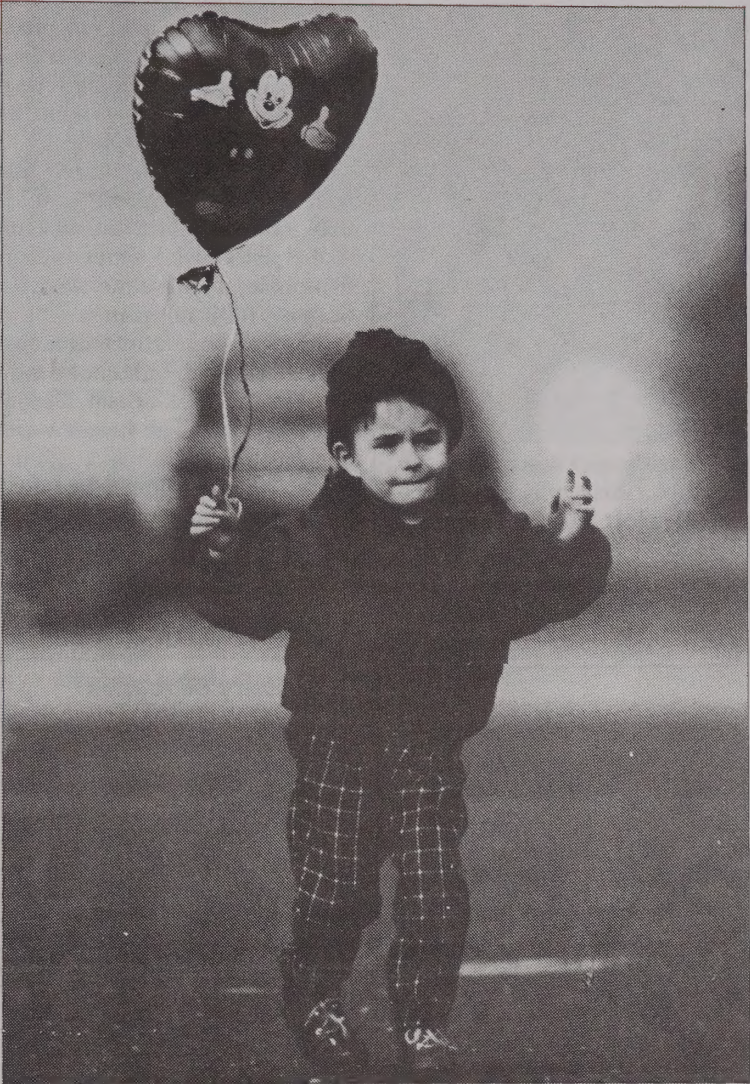


# Disability Now

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CLASSIFIEDS



Home from the Peto Institute, Andrew Buckley, 4, from Tile Hill, Coventry, now goes on half-mile sponsored walks with his Mickey Mouse balloon.

## Conductive education: new moves

Two major initiatives may result in conductive education becoming more widely available in Britain.

After lengthy negotiations, The Spastics Society has announced details of a new agreement with the Peto Institute in Hungary, and plans are also underway for British Government collaboration in the development of an international centre to train "conductors" in Budapest.

A team of top-level Hungarian civil servants with Dr Maria Hari, director of the Peto Institute, came to London last month at the invitation of the Government.

They were here to discuss various ways in which Britain might co-operate on a new international centre in Budapest which could boost the number of trained conductors available to practise conductive education.

(Conductive education, pioneered in Hungary, is most famous for helping disabled children to walk.)

The alternatives put forward included a joint venture between Britain and Hungary, with Britain contributing, it is said, £30 million; or some wider international agreement.

A spokesman for the Department of Social Security commented: "The intention is that

conductive education in this country should be complementary or additional to existing services, not a replacement of what we do now".

He could not say when a decision would be announced.

The agreement between The Spastics Society and the Peto Institute is for an inter-change of staff and children over the next few years.

After lengthy negotiations with Dr Hari, both here and in Hungary, the Society acknowledges that since it does not use fully

*continued on page 2*



Dr Hari and Doug Shapland.

## Dual purpose wheelchair one day?


Nearly four years after the McColl report into Artificial Limb and Appliance Centres made an indoor/outdoor powered wheelchair one of its main recommendations, the Disablement Service Authority (DSA) is to do a pilot project into the supply of the chairs.

The 12-month project will get users' reactions to occupant-controlled indoor/outdoor chairs and will assess how many people might qualify to be issued with one.

The study will not be a test of the wheelchairs themselves but of the contribution they make to the quality of life of severely disabled people.

In announcing the initiative, the DSA said it fully accepted that there is a gap in its wheelchair service.


Professor Ian McColl who wrote the original report calling for indoor/outdoor chairs is now vice-chair of the DSA. He said: "It is only a beginning but at last we are on the way."

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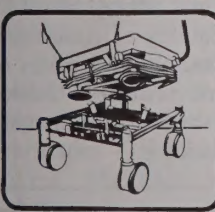


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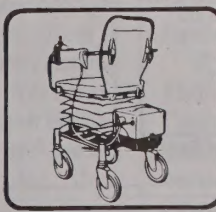


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## New mainstream charity

Mainstream, a new charity "to promote the integration of people with disabilities and learning difficulties", got off to a flying start in January.

A full-page advertisement in *The Guardian*, paid for by the advertising agency Leagas Delaney Partnership (£4,700), produced "an overwhelming response", according to Mainstream member Simon Newman.

Mainstream is essentially a gang of four: Peter Newell, late of the Children's Legal Centre, Patricia Potts, an Open University lecturer, and management consultant Simon Newman and lawyer David Ruebain, both of whom have a disability.

"The idea is to be an independent, single-issue lobby group", said Patricia Potts. Mainstream hopes to raise awareness and join

with like-minded organisations to help end segregation in education, housing, employment, transport and leisure.

So far its income, not disclosed, has paid for freelance research on employment and disability. Eventually, it hopes to have an education studies centre, a bookshop, meeting place and multi-media resource base.

"The intentions are admirable, but to what extent are they linking with other disabled people?" commented Bert Massie, assistant director of RADAR. "No Peto developments, no sheltered workshops, no Motability, no Paralympics. Have they thought of all that? One would like to see precise plans".

Mainstream, PO Box 69, Bishops Stortford, Herts CM22 7LG, tel: (0279) 70524.



## Social Fund guidelines amended

The discretionary guidelines, which social fund officers use to decide whether or not to give out loans and grants under the controversial Social Fund, are to be amended "to lay more stress on the scope for flexible application".

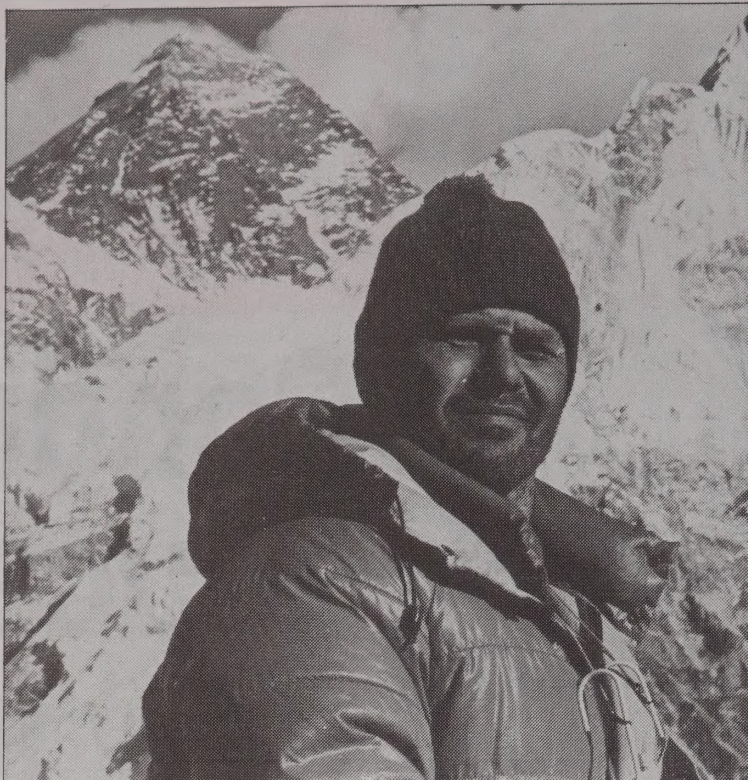
This was announced by Bill Taylor, the under-secretary responsible for social security policy, at a conference in Sheffield last month.

Over half of the applications for non-repayable community care grants have been refused since the Social Fund started in April 1988. (The money allocated for grants makes up 30 per cent of the total Social Fund budget of some £200 million).

Take-up of loans got off to a slow start but the DSS says it is now meeting its expected budget allocation.

Mr Taylor admitted that there has been, "an over-rigid interpretation by some Social Fund officers of guidance that itself was over-cautiously drafted."

## On top of the world



John Hawkrige, who has cp and walks with sticks, successfully climbed part of the Everest range before Christmas to a place called Kala Pattar, 18,145 ft above sea level. It has the best view of Everest itself. John walked 45 miles in 14 days and said there were many places with horrific drops. But it all ended safely and a BBC documentary of the trek will be shown in the summer.

## Aluminium in water — clue to Alzheimer's disease

A link has been established between aluminium in drinking water and premature senile dementia (Alzheimer's disease).

The presence of aluminium in the brains of many people with Alzheimer's disease led scientists to investigate further.

Researchers, from the Medical Research Council's environmental epidemiology unit at Southampton General Hospital, did a survey of 88 districts in England and Wales with differing concentrations of aluminium in the water supply.

They found that where the concentration is higher than 0.11 milligrams per litre the risk of Alzheimer's is 1.5 times higher than in areas where the concentration is 0.01 milligrams.

The highest concentrations were found in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Devon and Cornwall. The lowest were in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Hampshire.

The scientists stress they found no evidence that aluminium was linked to other causes of dementia or epilepsy.

The results do not point to aluminium in water as the sole cause of premature dementia. Even in areas with a high concentration in the drinking supply, daily intake will be less than 0.5 milligrams a day. Three to ten milligrams will come from food and up to 50 milligrams per day from food additives.

Everyone takes in around five to ten milligrams each day but only a very small proportion of this aluminium is absorbed.

The scientists at Southampton think that because aluminium in water is either dissolved or in solution it might be more easily absorbed. Dr Christopher Martyn, who led the research, said they will certainly do further research to find out if this is true.

Of their initial research he said: "This is a clue about the causes of Alzheimer's disease and a clue we shouldn't ignore."

In a statement the Alzheimer's Disease Society said: "More research would have to be undertaken before any definitive evidence can be drawn. The Society cannot make any criticism of the report."

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### Conductive education

*continued from page 1*

trained conductors the work it does with children is not conductive education.

"We recognise that conductive education a la Peto can only be developed longer term", said the chairman, Douglas Shapland. "However, in the meantime, the Society accepts that direct links with Hungary can only enhance the quality of service that it offers."

Three schools, with 106 children following the special interdisciplinary programme, will be involved in the interchange.

This month six members of staff drawn from Ingfield Manor School in Sussex, Rutland House School in Nottingham and the Percy Hedley School in Newcastle-on-Tyne (which is affiliated to the Society) will visit the Peto Institute for a week; then in April and June a conductor from the Institute will visit the schools. In September 12

children and staff drawn from Percy Hedley and Ingfield Manor will go to Hungary for three weeks and later a conductor will visit them in their schools.

The agreement will then be reviewed and, hopefully, repeated next year.

"This is the start of a new era for Ingfield Manor", said Anthony Hewson, chairman of the governors and father of a child in the programme.

"Our main objective now is to get to the stage where we can have full conductor training at the international centre in Budapest, but that is in the Government's hands."

Even if plans for the centre go ahead soon, it has been estimated that it will be eight years before the first trained conductors emerge (training alone takes four years), and the Peto Institute alone cannot meet the growing demand.

A few conductors are being trained in Britain. Under an agreement with Dr Hari and with some support from the Government, eleven qualified teachers are working with eighteen children at the Birmingham Institute for Conductive Education. But it will be another three years before they are trained.


"If you are talking about the ready availability of conductors, you're talking about decades not years", said Andrew Sutton, director of the Foundation which runs the Institute.

### A HANDICAPPED CHILD?

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## Big break for cystic fibrosis?

Scientists researching into the gene which causes cystic fibrosis, the condition killing three people a week in this country, sense that a major breakthrough is imminent.

"We have recently made a significant jump in our progress, and expect to isolate the gene responsible for CF in the next year or two," says Michelle Ramsay, who works with Dr Bob Williamson's team of researchers at St Mary's Hospital, London.

Teams working in such places as Toronto and Salt Lake City have pooled their findings since 1985, and the advances made have been "enormous" says Ms Ramsay.

Even so, it may take up to ten years before any practical remedy can be found for the condition, which is almost exclusive to white people.

★ The Cystic Fibrosis Society celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. An appeal for £5 million has been launched, and a service will be held in Westminster Abbey on 23 February. 15 – 23 April this year will be C.F. Week.

## One handed trucker



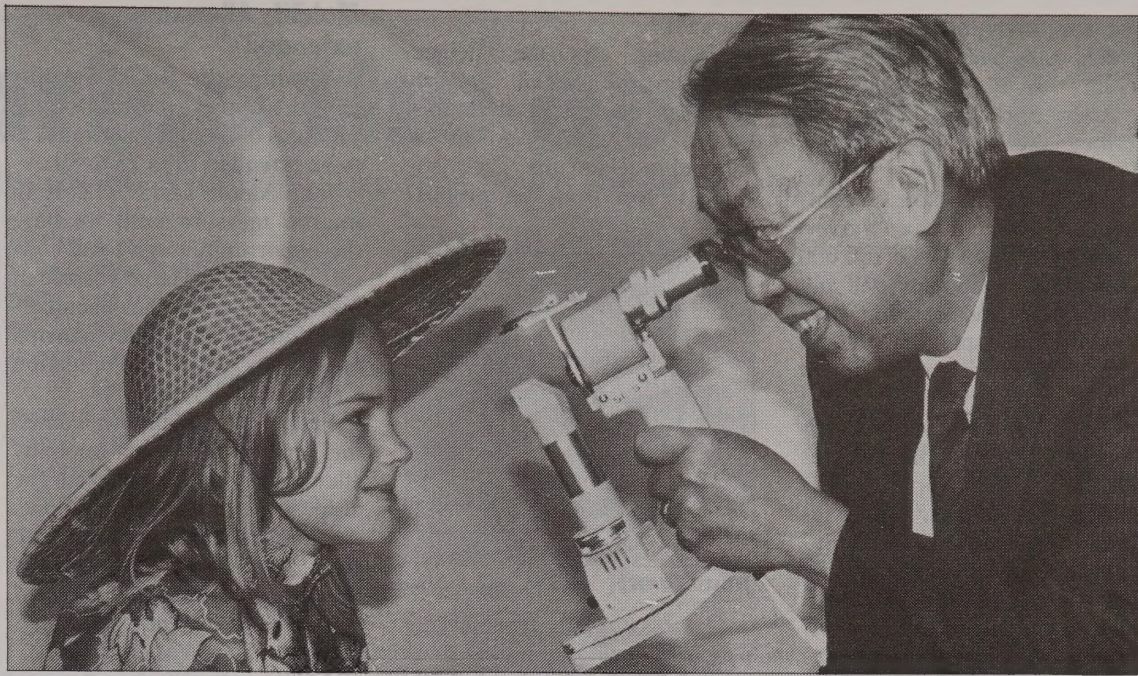
Mark Woodward, 22, has qualified to drive a 38 tonne truck, despite having only one hand.

Born without his left hand, Mark spent the last five years driving 7.5 tonne trucks from Newcastle to Brighton to gain experience, and has now passed his Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) license.

The examiner said "it was the safest drive I've had for a long time," and commended the instructors – S Jones of Walsall, West Midlands – for their tuition.

The training centre has had deaf people and leg amputees among its graduates, but Mark is the first one-handed pupil.

Determination to be a Class 1 HGV driver meant that Mark learnt how to change gear with his left wrist. Now his success means not only that he can make continental deliveries, but that his girlfriend, Lisa Miller, will marry him.



The Chinese ambassador, Mr Ji Chaozhu, tests Caroline Holdron's eyesight at a £10,000 mobile eye centre. Paid for by the Government, Shanning International and International Disability Service, it is for use in remote areas of China. The clinic was presented to the ambassador in December by Jimmy Savile, and resulted from a meeting in September when Deng Pufang, disabled son of China's leader Deng Xiaoping, and director of China Welfare Fund for the Handicapped visited the UK. The clinic detects cataracts, which affect more than four million people in China.

## Integrated schools' project

Pupils from local schools – abled and disabled – are taking part in a study to determine how accessible Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield are.

Findings will be compiled into an "Accessibility Directory" for local residents. The aim is to make everyone more aware of the problems faced by disabled people.

The project's initiator, Elizabeth Murray, rejected the idea that the scheme should have employed more disabled people. "It

is an exercise to highlight inequalities and to discourage able-bodied people from intimidating disabled people or destroying equipment provided for them," she said.

"I believe that it's unfair to expect someone who is discriminated against, for race, sex or disability, to be burdened with putting it right.

"It's the environment which is disabling, and it's up to everyone to take responsibility for changing it."

## Community services lost

In last month's *DN* we asked readers to send in specific examples of services to disabled people hit by the end of the community programme.

You sent in examples of projects from around the country, ranging from a club for physically disabled people to a scheme providing free laundry and clothing repair services. All are under

threat because they lost CP funding. One became a non-profit organisation but it has now folded.

We are passing these letters on to the The Spastics Society's Campaigns Department, which is taking the matter up with the Government. If you know of any other examples, please send them in.

## New Year's honours in disability

Robin Surgeoner, winner of four gold medals for swimming at the Paralympic games, and profiled in *DN* last month, received an MBE in the New Year's honours list.

Wheelchair sprinter Chris Hallam also received an MBE for "services to Paraplegic Sports". and so did Graham Salmon, for services to sport for the visually handicapped.

OBEs were awarded to Ronald Barnes, ex-headteacher, Stony Special School, Essex, and James Waddell, Manchester Committee for the Employment of Disabled People.

Other MBEs included Angela Alderman, teacher of deaf children; Anne Banks, headteacher, Cronberry Special School, Ayrshire; Doreen Gilmour, Community Mental Handicap Nurse, Stockport; Ian Harrison, director of Leicestershire Association for the Dis-

abled; William Hartley, for services to disabled people in Cheshire; Edward Hebblethwaite of the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association; Avril Mackie, for services to mentally handicapped people in Glasgow; John Porter (Committee for the Employment of Disabled People); Joyce Robinson, for services to mentally handicapped people in Cardiff; Anna Simpson, officer in Psychiatric and Mental Handicap Unit, Tayside; Michael Strobe, for services to Chailey Heritage, Handicapped Children's Pilgrimage Trust; Rosemary Stroyan, for services to disabled people and Leonard Tasker, founder of Coventry Enterprise Club for disabled people.

### Share your problems by phone

If you want advice on a personal or spiritual problem, why not talk to Lin Berwick, *Disability Now's* telephone counsellor, who is disabled herself?

Lin is at the end of the line on Monday afternoons from 1pm to 5pm, and on Thursdays from 6pm to 10pm.

Her telephone number is Hornchurch (04024) 77582.

## Right to see GP reports

People now have the right to see reports which are written about them by their GP for employment or insurance purposes.

Under the Medical Reports Act which came into effect on 1 January, patients can see reports before or after they are sent. (You have six-months to question the report after it is sent out.)

If people disagree with anything in the report they can refuse to allow it to be sent or, if GPs refuse to amend it, add objections before it is released.

Under the terms of the new Act, "medical report" covers both physical and mental health.

The Act began life as a Private Members Bill put forward by SLD MP Archy Kirkwood, supported by the Campaign for Freedom of Information and the British Medical Association.



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## IN PARLIAMENT

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

#### Unemployment benefit tightened

The Social Security Bill, now through its second reading, requires people on unemployment benefit to demonstrate they are "actively seeking work".

Moving the Bill, Social Security Secretary John Moore said that a top limit of 13 weeks during which claimants can turn down lower paid work than they were used to would ensure claimants could not continue indefinitely pricing themselves out of any job they might realistically be expected to get.

Labour accused the Government of resurrecting an eligibility

test for unemployment benefit which had been abolished in 1930.

Archy Kirkwood (SLD) described the test as "muddle-headed and mean".

John Moore cited the Government's Labour Force Survey, claiming that in 1987 730,000 unemployed claimants had not been actively seeking work, while 360,000 "did not even pretend that they wanted a proper job at all".

Shadow Social Security Minister Margaret Beckett replied that most people without work had no choice. "They include many whose health is impaired by sickness or injury, who have been ruled 'fit for light work' to save money on disability benefits. No consideration has been given or will be given as to whether light work is available or whether any employer would have such people to do it".

According to reports by the Manpower Services Commission, "at most a minority might not be actively looking for work",

she said.

Winding up the debate, Minister for Social Security Nicholas Scott said that most people actively seek work. "Genuine claimants have nothing to fear from our proposals".



John Moore

Organisations representing people with disabilities are concerned that, as a result of the Bill, disabled people may end up in unsuitable employment. Peter Thurnham (Cons), speaking for them, hoped that how the "actively seeking work" test is applied receives careful consideration.

#### Mobility Allowance extended

Also within the Social Security Bill, the upper age limit for the payment of mobility allowance is to be extended from 75 to 80.

John Moore said: "This is an interim measure until we have the opportunity to give full consideration to the large volume of information which has been collected during the surveys carried out by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys".

Peter Thurnham welcomed the chance to review mobility allowance, but he believed the proposed extension "only puts off the problem for another five years, because such people will have the allowance removed when they reach the age of 80". He wanted it extended for life.

A consortium of voluntary organisations, including The Spastics Society, is urging the Government to review both the age limit and the qualifying requirements for mobility allowance.

Kate Nash

## MICROTECH



Janet Larcher reports

#### Coventry survey finds critical users

Many *DN* readers helped with a survey by Coventry Polytechnic on Computers and Disabled Users.

A report of the survey confirms that disabled users "appreciate the usefulness of computers", but are frustrated by "difficulties in finding information and expert

help".

Many identified particular problems or inconveniences with their own equipment and offered suggestions for putting them right. But there was no consensus on individual requirements beyond the need for more reliable and easier-to-control disc drives and printers, and access to environmental controls.

The new Department of Health-approved Possum environmental control unit, PSU6, can include an emulator for an IBM compatible computer, and Hugh Steeper are bringing out a wordprocessing and emulation system for the BBC Master with layout easily adaptable to individual needs. The Steeper system will work with the Steeper environmental control system,

which is also DoH-approved.

There are now several software packages for IBM compatible machines which allow the IBM to be tailored to individual needs. Hardware and software devices are similarly available for BBC computers.

Information leaflets on *Environmental Controls: Availability and Acquisition* and *Controlled Computers: Tailoring your computer's characteristics to suit your needs* will be available free from The Spastics Society's Microtechnology Resource Centre from the end of February.

Some respondents to the survey said input devices were so complex to set up that they became a major obstacle to using equipment.

Users, carers, teachers and counsellors all reported the need for more training as well as "lack of money ... restricting the range of equipment that could be tried out".

If an individual is assessed against a limited range of equipment, inevitably some users' needs will not be met adequately or efficiently. Combined with lack of monitoring and follow-up, this will result in complex input systems which impede rather than help access to equipment.

#### New support service for all ages and disabilities

The Spastics Society has recognised many of these problems and set up a Microtechnology Support Service for users of all ages, from pre-school to elderly, and all levels of mental and physical ability.

The service extends beyond how to use a computer to using microtechnology to increase independence in all aspects of life, including mobility, communication, control of the domestic environment, education, work and leisure. It is recognised that users cannot benefit fully from microtechnology without considerable support, which includes assessment, training and back up.

Since the cost of such a service can only be estimated, a pilot project has begun in the East re-

gion and another will start in the North West around Easter. They will try to build on existing provision and develop facilities with other agencies.

Each region will have a local coordinator, with overall management coming from the Society's Microtechnology Resource Centre in Purley, Surrey.

The service will offer:

- assessment of individual needs
- impartial advice to individuals and organisations on equipment and software
- information sheets
- a lending library of equipment and software
- an exhibition of hardware and software which can be seen by appointment
- advice and consultancy to equipment and software developers
- training courses for professionals and parents
- information on other centres and organisations.

We hope the Purley Resource Centre can meet local needs when the Redbridge SEMERC closes next month when Government funding ceases. (Bristol and Newcastle SEMERCs are continuing, but with reduced staff, while Manchester SEMERC, which has been actively supported by Oldham LEA, has been renamed the North West SEMERC.)

For further information on the survey: *Technology & Special Needs Group, c/o Dr J Pickering, Psychology Department, Warwick University, Coventry CV4 7AL.*

*Microtechnology Support Service, The Spastics Society, 840 Brighton Road, Purley, Surrey CR2 2BH, tel: 01-660 8552.*

*North West SEMERC, St Martin's Road, Fitton Hill, Oldham OL8 2QE, tel: 061-627 4469.*

*Dr Janet Larcher heads The Spastics Society's Microtechnology Resource Centre.*

*In March DN she will report on the British Education and Training Technology exhibition.*

## IN BRIEF

#### Which? extends tests

*Which?*, the Consumers' Association magazine, is extending its testing programme to highlight features which are particularly helpful or awkward for people with physical disabilities.

In the January issue there is a 10-page special on washing machines, washer-driers and spin-driers. Cookers and vacuum cleaners will come later. *Which?* will tell manufacturers how they might improve their products to benefit disabled users.

The magazine is in most public libraries or is available on subscription (£51 per year). Write to PO Box 44, Hertford SG14 1SH for details but don't send any money yet.

#### Headway desperate

Headway, the National Head Injuries Association, is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

There are 70,000 people in the UK living with the long-term effects of serious head injuries and every year 2,000 more people are added to this number.

Headway desperately needs money to expand its work. They already have 70 support groups throughout the UK and publish leaflets and booklets on living with head injury. Donations to the Appeal Director, Headway, 200 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HX.

#### New Aids video

A new video is aimed at increasing deaf teenagers understanding of Aids.

Called *Sign of the Times* the 28-minute film, which uses deaf actors, sign language and subtitles, is about a girl coming to terms with the fact her brother is gay and the value of talking openly about HIV and Aids. £10 from the Welsh Health Promotion Authority, Cardiff and the Wales Council for the Deaf.

#### South London service

Disabled drivers in South London can take advantage of a new service to motorists - an unbiased motoring consultant.

Sanson Vehicle Consultants has shopped around and come up with a network of selected workshops, repair centres and MOT centres which offer the best service and price.

Importantly for people with disabilities, the consultancy also provides a door-to-door service, collecting and returning customers' cars, and loaning replacement cars at "reasonable rates". Telephone 01-698 6096.

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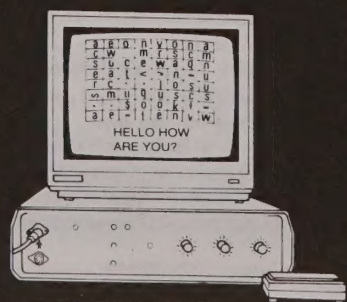
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# What price the poll tax?

Brian Lamb, The Spastics Society's lobbyist, explains how it will affect you

From April this year, domestic rates in Scotland will be replaced by a community charge (poll tax), and England and Wales will follow suit in April 1990.

Registration in Scotland is almost complete. If you live in England or Wales you can now expect to get your registration forms after the May election.

The amount everyone will be taxed will vary from one area to another, but the Government is estimating £300 per person in England and Wales judging from the amount it has allowed in income support rebates for those on benefit.

Most people over 18 will be liable to the tax. It will be a flat rate charge payable at the beginning of every financial year. As with domestic rates, it can be paid in monthly instalments. Couples will be jointly liable, so if one defaults the other must pay.

Because some local authorities will receive extra grants from the Government during the change-over, the full effect of the changes will not be apparent – especially in London – until 1994.

Government figures suggest that when it is established, the poll tax bill for a two-adult household will be on average about 30 per cent higher than current rates in the North, Yorkshire and Humberside, and 90 per cent higher in Inner London. In the South East it will be 20 per cent lower.

## Who will be exempt?

**Residential homes.** As a result of successful lobbying by disability groups during the passage of the Scottish legislation, disabled people living in residential or nursing homes will be exempt from poll tax. (This covers homes giving continuous care under the 1984 Registered Homes Act or section 21 of the 1948 National Assistance Act, run by local authorities, health authorities, voluntary organisations or private companies.)

The position of hostels and small accommodation units outside the scope of the Registered Homes Act has yet to be decided, but night shelters will be exempt. **Volunteers.** The Government has agreed to exempt some volunteers who provide care for disabled people.

It is clear that they intend to impose an age limit and a strict definition of the amount to be paid. Capital limits may be based on housing benefit rules.

**People with severe mental handicap.** The exemption scheme was passed with some amendments after pressure from voluntary organisations.

As it stands now, a severely mentally impaired person, as stated in a certificate from a medical practitioner, is to be exempt from poll tax.

But he or she must also meet the following conditions: entitlement to invalidity pension under the terms of the Social Security Act 1975, or to severe disablement allowance, or be of pensionable age (60 for women, 65

for men).

In a new consultation document, just out, the Government has suggested the following additions: that the person is entitled to an unemployability supplement or an unemployability allowance. The effect will be to extend the exemption further.

Severe mental impairment is

## Who will get rebates?

People who are dependent on income support or who have an income equal to, or lower than, income support will be entitled to the "community charge benefit".

This will function in the same way as housing benefit, with the same means testing, reduced benefit as income rises and capital

their rates or poll tax. Under pressure they have now agreed to finance that 20 per cent out of income support.

However, this "compensation" has been planned as a flat rate payment based on a national average. Many people living in areas where the poll tax is above the national average will have to

In future years, the compensation absorbed into the income support rates will have even less to do with the real amounts paid and there is no guarantee that income support will keep pace with inflation.

Almost half of all income support claimants have poll tax liabilities above the average, so many will face extra payments.

## If you don't pay

The Government will be able to recoup unpaid taxes from benefit deductions or from earnings.

Many people spend all their income support on daily living and will not be able to find their poll tax contributions. If they get behind with payments and have them deducted, they will face further debt just to live.

The Act has been improved in its passage through Parliament, but only at the margins. It is still unrelated to an ability to pay.

The rebate system is flawed and underfunded. It will not protect many disabled people and others will find their income squeezed still further.

New evidence from the OPCS survey shows that many disabled people are already living on or below the poverty line. The poll tax will only make matters worse for many of them.

The view of the Social Security Advisory Committee, that the rebate system would cause "increased hardship, increased debt, or both", still stands.

A free guide will be available from The Spastics Society's Campaigns Department in May.



"a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind, which involves severe impairment of intelligence and social function" or "an injury to the brain causing severe mental impairment of intelligence and social functioning which appears permanent".

The Act gives the Secretary of State for Social Security power to vary these definitions.

Including the invalidity pension was necessary to ensure that people who become severely mentally impaired as adults are also eligible for exemption, while people over pension age had to be included as they might not have been eligible for either benefit, eg those with advanced Alzheimer's Disease.

These amendments have widened the scope of the exemption and made it more consistent. But the social humiliation of a certification procedure creates a dilemma for parents and mentally handicapped people.

There are also practical problems that will make its application uneven and unfair.

Most GPs have little experience or training in assessing people with a mental handicap, yet they will have to apply the definitions in the legislation. Despite the best efforts of individuals, there will be an uneven pattern of exemptions with inconsistent decisions and there is no appeals procedure against a GP's decision.

These points highlight the folly of trying to construct an exemption system based on the level of mental handicap rather than on the ability to pay.

Organisations such as MEN-CAP and The Spastics Society have called on the Government to establish assessment panels using members of district mental handicap teams.

Much better information must also be provided on the rules governing the exemptions, and GPs will need proper guidelines if they are to be the lynchpin of the certification procedure.

limits. For every £1 that your income rises above the income support level, you will lose 15p in community charge benefit. (See the *Disability Rights Handbook*).

At present almost one in four people do not claim the housing benefit they are entitled to. Faced with a new and confusing situation, take-up of the new benefit may be even lower.

## People on income support

Originally the Government intended that everyone on income support should pay 20 per cent of

pay the difference out of their basic income support.

Social Security Secretary John Moore made it clear in his annual uprating statement in October that the new estimate of £1.15 a week for single people under 25, £2.30 for couples, with single people over 25 remaining at £1.30, was a once-and-for-all adjustment to income support levels to cover poll tax liability.

But these rates do not make up for the original underpayment for last year; nor do they take into account the actual poll tax charges next year.

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Letters to the Editor

Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

Underwhelmed by help

I read with interest Hedley Chappell's review of *Cerebral Palsy: Problems and Practice* by Margaret Griffiths and Mary Clegg (DN January). My interest turned to incredulity when I read that the two authors, with unrivalled experience in the field of cerebral palsy, were aware of the danger that parents might "feel overwhelmed by the number of professionals who are involved in helping their child". My son, aged 6½, is profoundly mentally and physically handicapped as a result of cerebral palsy and I can assure both Hedley Chappell and the authors that my wife and I have been far from overwhelmed by the help we have received from professionals. "Appalled", "aghast", "dismayed" and "bewildered" are more appropriate adjectives to describe our reaction to the lack of help which has been available. It seems to me that if your youngster is only moderately handicapped and that there is a good chance of a discernible improvement in your child's development if help is provided, then the path to your front door could be well-trodden by caring professionals. Our experience, unfortunately, has been that the more profound your child's handicap (and consequently the more help you and your child need) the less help is provided. We have seen very little of so-called professionals and their so-called help. In our book, the concept is a joke. I wonder what other readers think.

Finally, is it just my son who does not have a "key-worker"? Peter J Bates Brynmour, Gwent

Poverty: what's to be done?

I am writing to say I saw the statement you made in *Disability Now* on disabled people being poor. I fully agree, but the thing is what's going to be done about it? I am disabled myself and I only have two incomes which are Mobility Allowance and SDA, but I feel it isn't anywhere near enough when you are charged £4 odd to go out in a taxi, even just to go a few miles twice a week. My parents help as well by picking me up, but I still don't earn enough. I don't work. I am still at College and all I get is help for the travelling expenses which is better than nothing. My main income is £40 a week. Gillian Clayton Colchester Essex

Involved, all the way

Your article (DN January) publicises the concern expressed in the report *Living Options Lottery* about the patchy provision and poor co-ordination of services available to severely disabled people. I think it is important to re-iterate that in formulating the report's conclusions and recommendations, evidence was drawn directly from more than 200 people with severe disabilities, living in a variety of situations. The funding for this work from the DHSS and King Edward's Hospital Fund for

London was channelled through this Advisory Group for administrative purposes. Guidance and control of the project, however, came from the Living Options Working Party which comprises representatives of more than 30 of the major voluntary organisations of and for disabled people, including BCODP. From the beginning of the project until the final launch every effort has been made to consult and involve disabled people at all stages and to reflect the views of service users. It is encouraging to know that with the co-operation of the King Edward's Hospital Fund for London there are high expectations that the work will be continued and efforts made to ensure that the views of those using services are taken into account at the planning stage, and that wherever possible representative users are also involved at management level. Nancy E Robertson Director The Prince of Wales Advisory Group on Disability 8 Bedford Row London WC1R 4BA Clothing and hoists The DLF Clothing and Footwear Advisory Service is proposing to write a resource paper on clothing and hoists. This is in response to the many enquiries we get on the matter. We would welcome any information on particular problems people have encountered and solutions they have identified, so that this can be shared with others. Please write to Elaine Fairey, Assistant to Clothing and Footwear Adviser at the address below. Ginny Jenkins MCSP Disabled Living Foundation 380-384 Harrow Road London W9 2HU

Fairy tales Your December issue carries an informative article, "Disabled People are Poor", and also a report from Parliament on charges for eye and teeth checks, child benefit freeze, Social Fund freeze and housing benefit reductions. Why then do you devote half a page to a Tory MP to "speak out"? What does he recommend? • involving individuals in their own care choices (ie informing them of the private sector) • "flexible mix of provision which allows individuals to buy a package of services" (with what?) • greater use of volunteers, because, "there has never been a time when there have been more active people with time and resources to spare" (ie unemployed due to this Government's policies and now a source of free labour!) • privatising community care (to whose benefit?) • ways of redirecting DSS budget and subsidies in our "subsidy-ridden" society. (!) ... Well! All those over-subsidised, well-off people with too much time on their hands might agree with him (they voted for him) but the majority of us live and struggle in the real world. Please don't waste your challenging and informative paper on such fairy tales which are an insult to disabled people, community and health workers everywhere. Kay Bastin Senior Community Physiotherapist Northendon Health Centre Manchester M22 4FL Not recommended Having been a member of the National Trust and Historic House Association, I had a wry smile when I saw the NT advertisement (DN January).

Over many years we always found Historic House owners much more helpful than the National Trust, who apart from being riddled with petty rules are always looking over their shoulders in case the "owners" who live on many of the premises still should not approve of allowing any member of the public privileges. In July 1986 I finally wrote to the Trust about the treatment meted out to my husband and myself (I cannot walk and he is almost blind) at Mottisfont, Hants, and Erddig, Wrexham. We received no reply and I let our membership lapse. I would not recommend disabled persons to expect much help from the National Trust. DL Morris Bournemouth Research project I would like to contact individuals with cerebral palsy, dating from birth, who have had children. It would involve them in correspondence and a short questionnaire. This is for a research project into the background factors that are generally supposed to be causes of the condition. Dr John Foley MD FRCP The Cheyne Centre 61 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea London SW3 5LX Poetic licence? News, views, features, information, *Disability Now* is a revelation - Offers tips, advice and help, No need to despair or yelp, Topics, themes, chosen with care, Graphics, ads, lay-out with flair. Accept my thanks and donation small - A little is better than nothing at all. Benita Bock Innsbruck Austria

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Out of sight There's a certain air of confusion in both the BBC and Home Office press departments over television licence fees. When DN rang up to determine whether blind people had a right to any reduction on the £60 colour fee, neither thought they had. "Are you sure?" we persisted. "Well, I'll just check," they both chimed. "Oh yes. It's £1.25." "So little?" we queried. "I'm afraid so," apologised the Home Office, "it's from when blind people were excused the radio licence, in the 1950s, when that was twenty-five shillings. They can, however, buy sound-only sets for around £45, which don't need any licence."

Bus bust Detroit Department of Transport in the United States are to appeal against a \$2.15m (£1.2m) award made to disabled people who were prevented from boarding local buses. The buses had been made accessible, but bus employees

refused to allow people on, giving no reason. Eighteen disabled people received the awards, ranging from \$3,000 to \$400,000 for a 20-year-old student who uses the bus to ride to college. "The \$2.5 million speaks to them where they understand - the pocketbook," said attorney Justin Ravitz, who represented the plaintiffs.

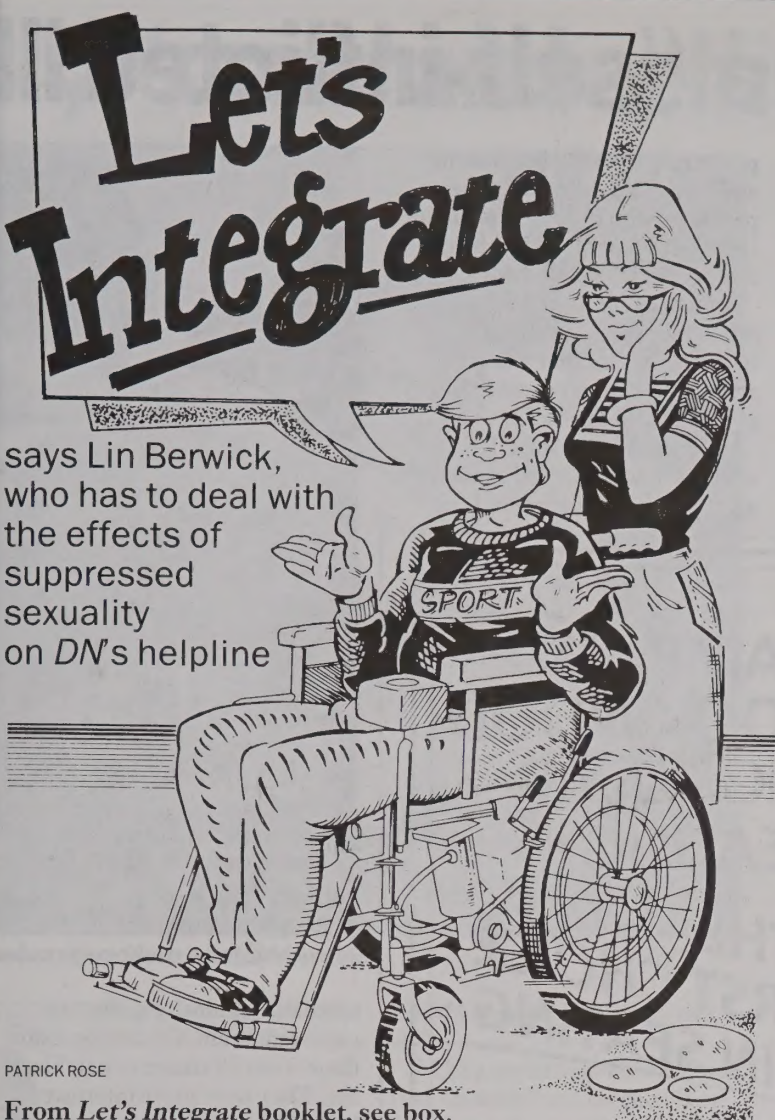
Ramp rumpus Despite investing thousands of pounds on refurbishing Harrow Post Office, when it came to opening time the long-awaited ramp was just not ready. "A temporary cabin provided whilst the Post Office was closed had been placed where the ramp will be," said P.O. spokesperson Alan Loom hastily, after being besieged by mothers with prams, people in wheelchairs and local councillors.

Sign of the times A TV review in the *Daily Telegraph* provoked a furious response from RNID chief executive Mike Whitlam over Christmas. He objected to the reviewer saying that the signed interpretation of the Queen's speech was "the funniest 10 minutes of the weekend."

Coming as it did among hours of comedy specials, Disney cartoons and multi-million dollar epics, the commendation deserved all that Mr Whitlam could throw at it. "Childish", "unfortunate", "a damaging blow", "ignorant", "gratuitous", "tasteless" and "outright discrimination" were among his phrases. Red faces and boxed ears at the *Telegraph*?

Whose body? Twelve years ago, Los Angeles doctors cured John Moore (unrelated to the former government golden boy, except perhaps ideologically) of hairy cell leukaemia. They later grew, and patented, a cell line from his spleen which has been used to develop a new drug for treating blood disorders. Was Mr Moore delighted that having been cured himself, his cell-line now saves the lives of others? Nah - he indulged instead in the traditional Californian sport of litigation and demanded a share of the profits. The California Court of Appeal have decided he *does* indeed have a "property interest in his bodily products". David Nicholson





From *Let's Integrate* booklet, see box.

St Valentine's Day comes round again this month, when men and women have a little fun sending unsigned tokens of affection to each other, and the florists' cash registers work over time because for one day in the year people don't mind what they pay to express their love. Romanticism is not yet dead, thank God.

Many of the calls I get on the DN counselling line are on the theme of relationships. But most of my callers have no romantic encounters in prospect. Their own sexuality and the feelings it produces are as much as they can cope with.

It is said that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing". No knowledge, I have found, is even more dangerous.

It may be true of special education still, but certainly in my schooldays there seemed to be a policy of avoiding sexual education so as not to heighten the desire for something that was unobtainable or too terrible to contemplate. One should not encourage disabled people, so the thinking went, in case they produced more disabled offspring who would become a responsibility of the state.

I am now dealing with the results of that attitude and it is heart breaking: people whose sexual development has been totally suppressed because of ignorance; people in their late 20s or older, who are just experiencing the emotions and needs that able-bodied people would have gone through in their teens.

The consequences of their deprivation are far reaching: desperate loneliness; a need for physical contact; fear about their body and how it works – particularly when it comes to gynaecological examinations.

I had one call from a university student who lacked the most basic understanding of sexuality

and this hampered her from having social relationships because she saw any encounter as a personal threat. I advised her to buy some teenage literature. She showed enormous courage to admit her naivete, but it took even greater courage to do something about it, aged 30.

Part of the problem lies in the conditioning we have undergone over the years which makes us believe we are undesirable. The stereotype, after all, is someone really attractive or handsome. We do not see many ordinary looking people in romantic love scenes or selling cars or drink on television. When was the last time you saw a disabled person in that role?

All too often disabled people see themselves as objects of caring rather than sharing. They are a "burden" rather than a person to be desired or cherished.

When they do have a rela-

**"The consequences of deprivation are far reaching: desperate loneliness; need for physical contact; fear about their body"**

tionship they are often very afraid, particularly if there is a hidden disability. Should the partner be told? They often believe, mistakenly, that if the partner realises the extent of the caring then he or she will run away.

My answer is that if someone does back off and run, then although it may be painful at the time, in the long term it is probably the best thing that could have happened. I speak from personal experience.

The only approach is complete honesty and openness about physical limitations. Then it is up to the partner to decide whether they wish to take it on or not. If you have been frank then criticism should not be levelled against you in the future.

One middle-aged caller struggled over this problem. She had met an "old flame" and in the intervening years had become disabled. She was concerned over the level of caring he would need to provide, although he wanted to do it.

The need for physical contact, being held and caressed, comes up again and again. One man said the last time he could remember being cuddled was by his mother and she died in 1965.

The issues of sexuality and physical disability are well documented, but not the needs of mentally handicapped people – yet these are coming over loud and clear on the DN line.

There seems to be a lot of concern by parents and professionals over the sexuality of mentally handicapped people, which surprises me, as their needs are just as relevant and meaningful as anyone else's. We all need to be needed and loved.

Sometimes the behaviour of a few mentally handicapped people is inappropriate, such as when they masturbate in public places. And one young man I was asked to try and help was masturbating over as many objects as he could find, carrying them into his bed; he seemed to have a need to own something.

## Information

*Entitled To Love*, by Dr Wendy Greengross 1979. Currently out of print; try your local library.

*Sexuality and Mental Handicap*, by Hilary Dixon, *Learning Development Aids*, 32 Bridge Street, Cambridge, £9.95.

*Mental Handicap in the Community*, ed Alan Leighton, Woodhead Faulkner, Fitzwilliam House, 32 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QY, paperback £14.95 (chapter on relationships).

*The Sex Directory*, compiled by Ann

Darnbrough and Derek Kinrade, Woodhead Faulkner, £19.95 (chapter on sexuality and disability).

*Sex for young people with spina bifi-da or cerebral palsy*, published by ASBAH, £1.25. Available from The Spastics Society bookshop, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

*Head Injury and Sexuality*, 75p; *Head Injury: Personal and Sexual Relationships*, 50p, both by Anthony Coughlan, Headway, 200 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HX.

*SPOD (The Association to Aid the Sexual and Personal Relationships*

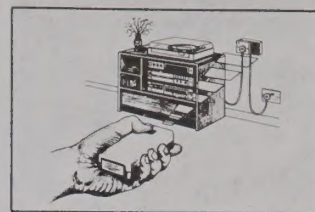
of People with a Disability), 286 Camden Road, London N7 0BJ, tel: 01-607 8851/2, runs training courses, workshops and study days. *Mental Handicap and Sex Education* is on 8 February and 10 May, and *Mentally Handicapped People and Sex* is on 23 February and 18 May.

*Let's Integrate, Young People with Handicaps in Youth Organisations*, by Dr Roger May, gives youth workers the information and inspiration to welcome disabled members. £4.25 (incl. p&sp) from Printforce, 6 Angel Hill Drive, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3BX.

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# Having a baby: a "mistake", a "self-inflicted illn

Three women with spina bifida talked about their experiences, good and bad, at a workshop organised for field-workers by the Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH), late last year. Geraldine Holden reports.

**"I felt more like a guinea pig than an expectant mum"**

JULIE, 26, who lives in London, has had a leg amputated below the knee and her bladder removed.

Her son Adam is four and a half. Julie had no access to genetic counselling and

worried throughout the pregnancy whether the child would have spina bifida.

She has been told since by a doctor that she should never have had a baby, although Adam is able-bodied.

"During the pregnancy I had problems with the stoma because as my stomach grew, it disappeared inwards. My husband put the bag on for me.

My main problems during the

pregnancy were the bag leaking and being sick every day. The problems with the stoma went on for about a year after the birth, until my weight settled down.

Initial reactions to the pregnancy varied among my relations. My mother was very pleased but if I had another baby now, she'd hit the roof.

The teaching hospital I attended had never had a mother with spina bifida before so I felt



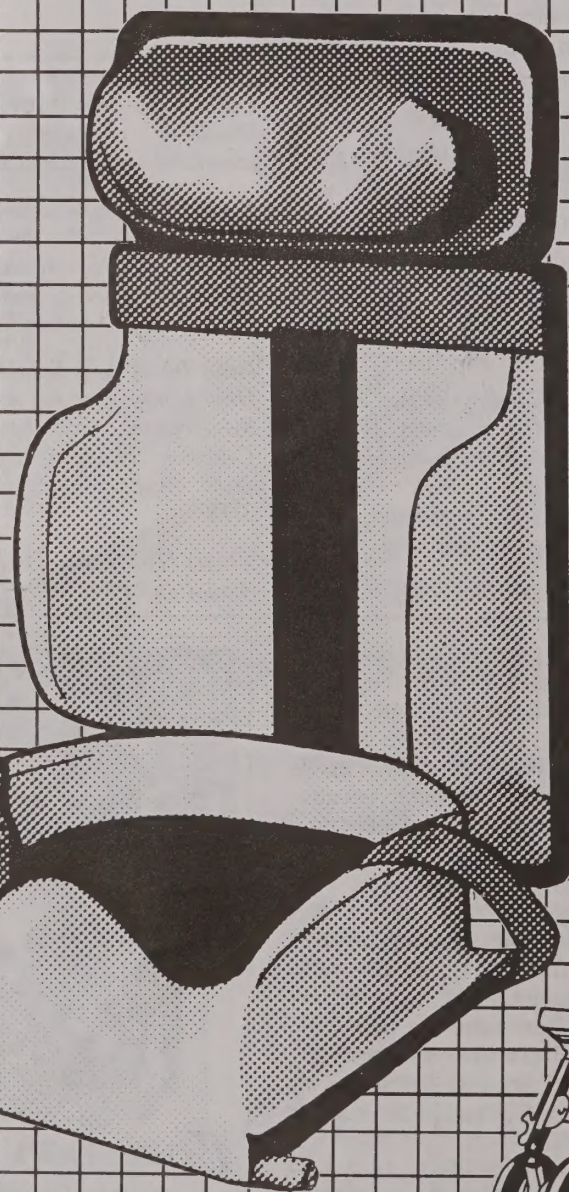
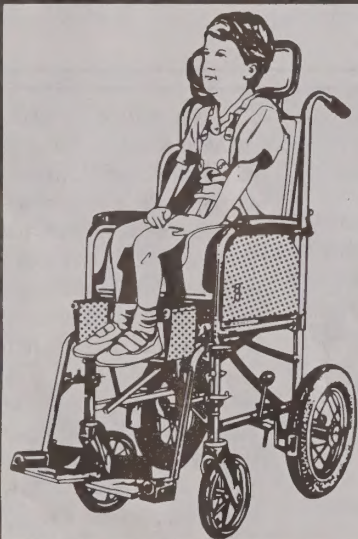
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Mary and John make paper chains

more like a guinea pig than an expectant mum. On one occasion there were 30 students watching me. They were more interested in finding out what *they* wanted to hear, than what I wanted to know. But I did have eight scans in all which was a good thing.

One doctor said I should have a Caesarian birth but another said it could be a normal delivery.

I was in labour for 12 hours but the hospital couldn't find the doctor who had agreed to the normal delivery, so eventually it was decided to deliver the baby by Caesarian.

They wanted to give me an epidural during labour but when I said I had spina bifida they decided against it!" (Gasps of horror from the ASBAH fieldworkers because it would have been very dangerous for someone with a spinal cord injury to have an epidural.)

"No-one offered my husband any support during the pregnancy. He had the job of calming me down but no-one calmed him down.

I was only put in touch with ASBAH for the first time five weeks ago. It would have been helpful during and after the pregnancy to have had someone I

Info

**The National Childbirth Trust,** Alexandria House, Oldham Terrace, London W3 6NH, tel: 01-992 8637, gives information on all aspects of pregnancy and has a resource list for parents with disabilities which is revised regularly. Send an A4 SAE. Another booklet, *The emotions and experiences of disabled mothers* costs £1.25 inc p&sp. The NCT also has **Contact Register** of parents with disabilities. If you would like to be put in touch with parents in your area contact Judy Vickery, 13 Chelsham Road, Clapham, London SW4.  
**The British Deaf Association** has video for deaf parents-to-be called **Having a Baby.** It costs £3.45 to hire for a week or £15 to buy (£10 for BDA members). BDA, 38 Victoria Place, Carlisle CA1 1HU.  
**The Royal National Association**



# s", "cruel and selfish"?



Two sons, Ben (centre) and Matthew.

SIMON ATKINS



A cuddle from his dad, Martin, helps calm during her pregnancy.

on  
the Blind also has relevant information. For an information pack on pregnancy contact Yvonne Rowe on (072) 45555.

**Pregnancy and the Disabled** is a free leaflet written by a wife who is herself disabled. Send an SAE to Contact TV, PO Box 444, Bath, BA1 1JH. **Other and Baby**, the magazine, is available on tape from the Talking Newspaper Association, tel: (04352) 2. It costs £7 per year.

**Disabled mother**, in the *Equipment for the Disabled Series*, gives advice on everything from benefits and resources for disabled mothers to feeding, nappy changing and safety. An up-dated edition (6th) will be out later in 1989. £6 inc p.p. from Equipment for the Disabled, 15 Marlborough Lodge, Nuffield Hospital, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LD, tel: (0865) 64811.

could have talked over my fears with.

I had a home help for the first year because I was on and off my feet. From the practical side that was good. But when my stomach was sore, I couldn't take Adam to playschool and got no help from social services.

I was told by a duty social worker that being pregnant and having a baby was 'a self-inflicted illness'.

Eventually I contacted my local paper and then I did get help and the social services even phoned me."

## "The hospital asked what I wanted"

MARY, 36, uses a wheelchair and is deaf after meningitis. She and her husband, John, live in Peterborough and have two sons – Ben who is two years, nine months old and Matthew who is 10 months. Ben was a normal delivery and Matthew a Caesarian. John also uses a wheelchair after an accident but he can walk with crutches and can ride a pushbike, with a child on the back.

"I had read all about diets and vitamin supplements and when we decided to have another baby, I went to my doctor to work out a diet.

It was one high in amino acids and because I am rhesus negative I also had special injections. After that the doctor said there was no reason why I shouldn't have a normal baby.

I couldn't go to parent classes because I got too big to get in the car. My stomach wouldn't fit under the wheel.

I was offered an amniocentesis test and a scan. The people at the hospital were marvellous. They asked me if I needed any help getting in and out of the bath, into bed etc. I felt they asked in the same manner they would ask anyone. I couldn't get in the bath because I was too fat! I had to get bathed in bed.

When I was pregnant with

Ben, I went in for a check up and they found I had a chest infection. They hadn't dealt with anyone with spina bifida before. The hospital were worried about my breathing so I stayed in for three months before the birth.

With Matthew, they asked me whether I wanted a normal birth or a Caesarian and I went in a week before.

I was worried about obstacles being put in the way at first, that's frightening. But the hospital asked what I wanted and didn't put obstacles in my way.

The hospital doctor had seen one other spina bifida mother and told her she had to have a Caesarian but I said just because he told her she had to, didn't mean I had to.

My mother and mother-in-law were both against me having a second baby and a stranger stopped me in the street and said I should never have had one child, never mind two.

I didn't really get any help when I went home. A social worker visited me and got me a REMAP pram that I could push from my wheelchair. The hospital already had a low cot for a wheelchair, which they said I could take home on loan.

The social worker said if I wanted any help, just to ask but we have managed. We prefer independence. John helps with the care of the children.

For me the most difficult practical task with young babies was just carrying them around because I can't grip them very well. Although the pram had been made, it's too heavy so with Ben I never went out. I can manage it with Matthew.

Ben understands that he hasn't got to run away. It's not much fun running away if no-one is going to run after you.

We've got very good neighbours and their children come in to play."

An ASBAH fieldworker who visited Mary in hospital just before Matthew's birth told the workshop how the ward sister was trying to be helpful by talking about birth control.

"She said 'we can't have any more mistakes' but Mary lip-read this and told her she had been married for nine years and both her babies were planned. The ward sister still tried to persuade Mary to be sterilised."

## "I didn't go into having children lightly"

SHIRLEY, 36, lives in Kent and has two sons who are nine and eleven. She and her husband separated seven years ago. She uses a wheelchair and has had one leg amputated below the knee.

"My mum wasn't very happy at all when I was first pregnant, she was worried for me.

When I was in having my second son, another mum said to me 'You're very cruel and selfish to have children. They are going to have to live with your burden for the rest of their lives'.

But I didn't go into having



SARA MURRAY

Adam enjoying a building game with Julie.

children lightly. If I felt I couldn't have given them a good life, I wouldn't have had them.

I was walking when I had both children and when I was carrying the first I worked until seven weeks before he was born.

I had a Caesarian for both of them and had a nasty experience the second time.

Then I came back to a new flat. I didn't know anyone and it was half-way up a hill. David, my eldest, was hyperactive and didn't sleep through a whole night until he was five-and-a-half years old. When we finally got a house with a garden, he settled down a bit.

The house is in a flat area, so I could get around. Social services wouldn't give us a lift until they knew we were going to stay. It was eight months before we got a lift and I had to go up and down stairs on my bottom once a day.

I had to make sure I had everything I needed for the children for the whole day.

I didn't have any special

equipment. I had a pram which was a bit heavier so I could lean on it without catapulting the baby out. I used a washing up bowl on a tea trolley for bathing them.

I kept the bib part of reins on them, so I could pick them up securely with one hand and support myself with the other. My second son ran away a lot when he was little and I had to use the wheelchair because I couldn't manage to get there quickly enough on my feet.

My marriage broke up when the children were five and two-and-a-half. This was the hardest time. People didn't pressurize me not to keep them, but I always have that fear. I felt people were watching.

I have had a home help since my husband left.

My major problem is other people's attitudes. The reaction of other mothers is sometimes a problem. But a lot of other children know I'm going to be in, so if their mums are working, they come to me."

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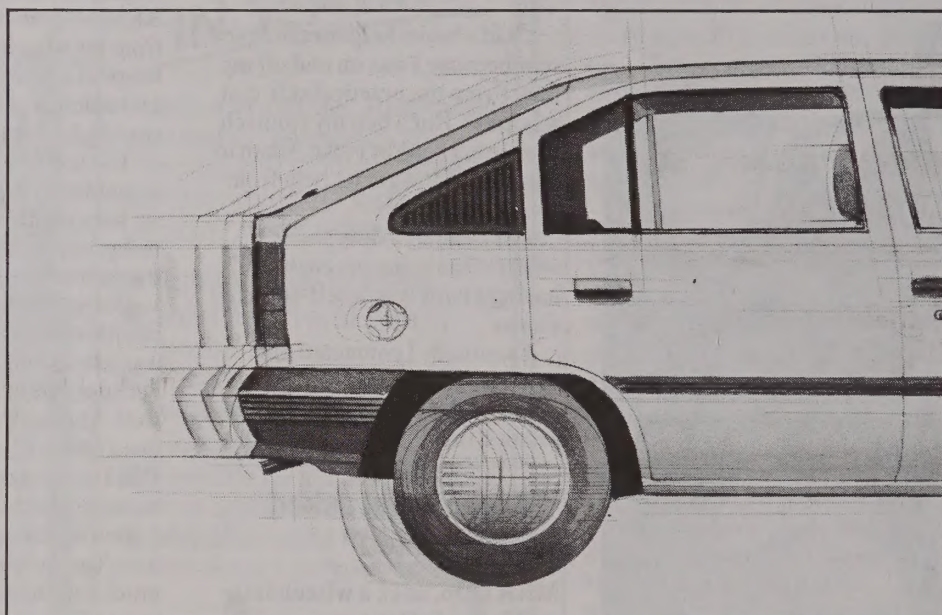
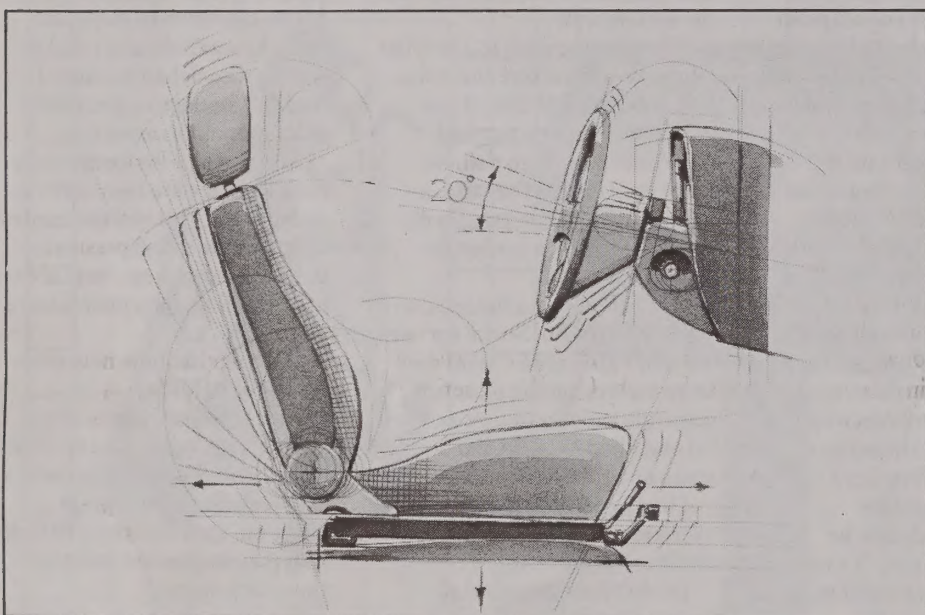
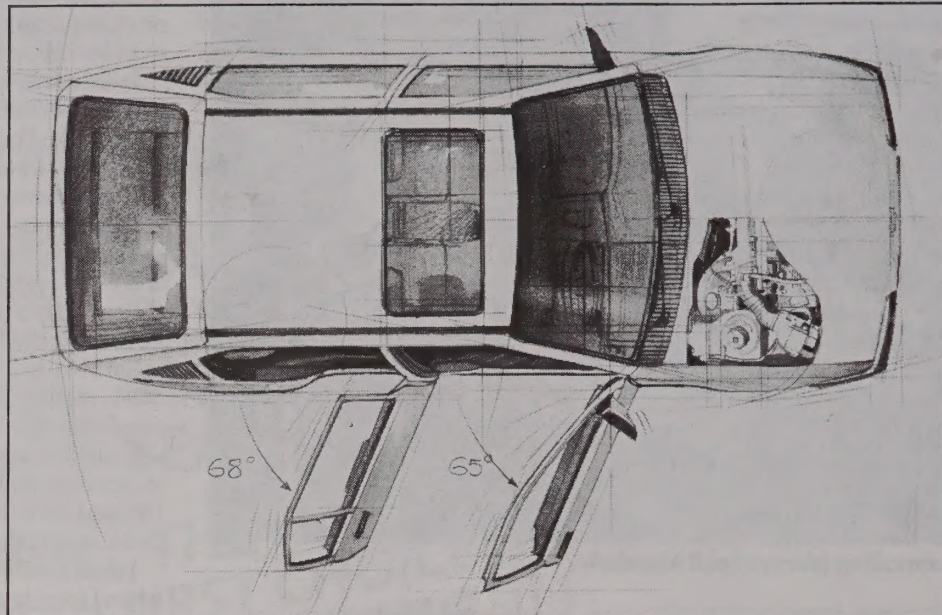
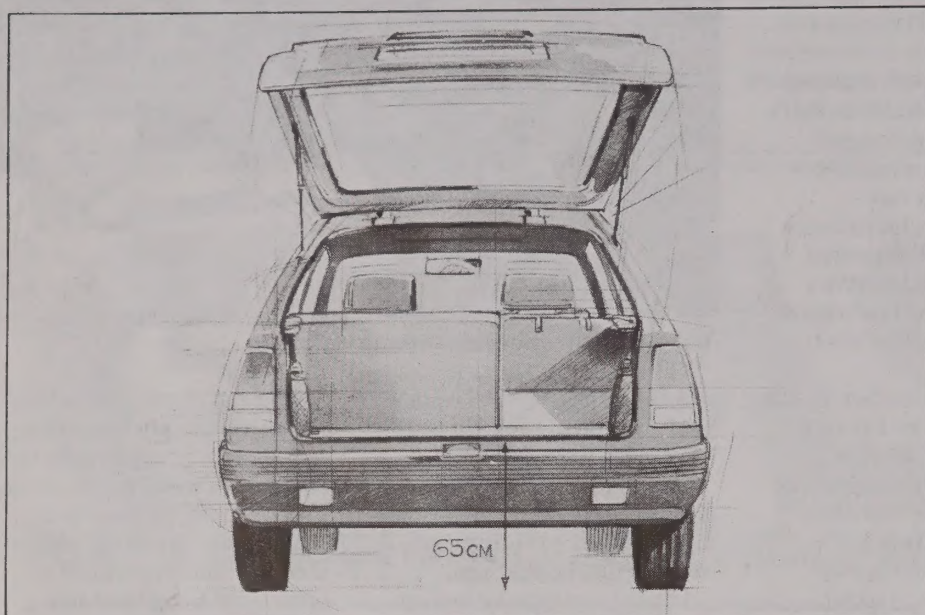
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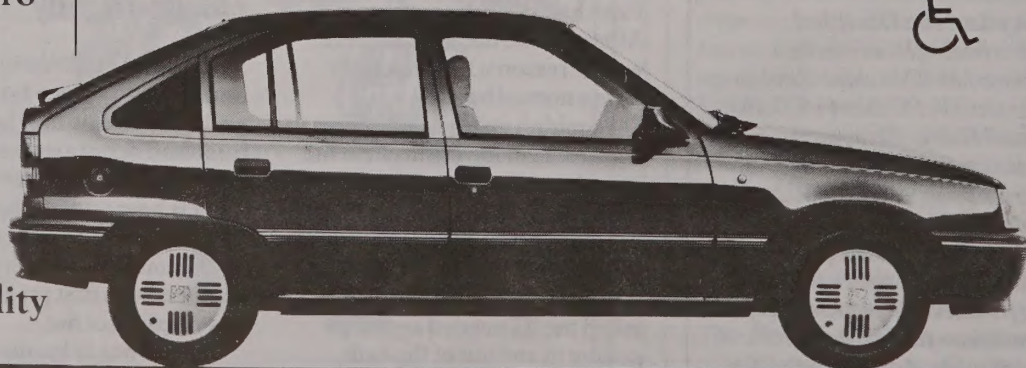
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## THEATRE

## Artist Descending a Staircase

When I hear a show is on in London's West End, I usually avoid it because the plots are mostly stale and the acting starchy. But Tom Stoppard's *Artist Descending a Staircase* at the Duke of York's Theatre was a very enjoyable exception.

Make sure you buy a programme if you go otherwise you are likely to be confused by the ingenious circular plot (it starts and finishes at the same point in time).

On one level the piece is a whodunnit and the play opens with two artists discussing the death of a third artist, who they share a garret studio with.

The sub-plot revolves around a general discussion of art and more specifically and more importantly, whose painting and which artist did Sophie fall in love with?

The complication arises owing to Sophie's blindness. Stoppard uses her blindness to juggle ideas

on how we see or view art.

Other than that the portrayal of Sophie seems to re-inforce the stereotype of a pretty, clever, blind young female, who amazes three male artists by pouring the tea and finding her way around the room in a game where the men try to make her lose her sense of direction.

Although Sarah Woodward is a competent actress and had

obviously put a great deal of effort into feigning blindness, I was not convinced.

Stoppard's script contains much witty repartee and many memorable, pithy quotes. However, in such a pacey production you have to be quick off the mark to memorise them! As well as the humour, there are moments of pathos particularly from the character of the older

Donner, sensitively acted by Alan MacNaughtan.

Carl Toms should be commended for the delightful set design. The theme of art was carried through by using sets which looked like sheets torn from an artist's sketchbook.

Good production, shame about the blind spot in casting a sighted actress for Sophie.

Ellen Wilkie



Blind Sophie (Sarah Woodward) amazes the three artists by pouring tea.

## BOOKS

## Therapeutic Claims in Multiple Sclerosis (second edition)

by William A Sibley MD  
(Macmillan Press £7.95)

When I was first diagnosed as having multiple sclerosis seven years ago, the only comfort specialists could give me was to say that, although there was no cure and very little in the way of treatment, something would be discovered within the next ten years.

Now, seven years later, no-one seems to be much further on. The big question for MS sufferers is what can we do?

Some specialists say take life a little easier, others say try evening primrose oil and others invite us to take part in a research project on the effectiveness of certain drugs.

At the end of the day, we are completely on our own with our condition. Because of this it is very easy to try anything.

When I was asked to review *Therapeutic Claims in Multiple Sclerosis*, I was very interested because in the two years it took me to come to terms with having MS, I tried a lot of things in the

vain hope one would make it disappear.

I had my amalgam fillings removed, discovered my food allergies, read Judy Graham's book on zinc, tried everything from vitamin megadose through gluten-free and low fat diets to hyperbaric oxygen, acupuncture, dorsal column stimulation, transcutaneous nerve stimulation and even hypnotherapy after it was suggested that subconsciously I may have wanted to be in a wheelchair!

All these therapies and more are in the book which has been extensively revised for this second edition.

It lists every known treatment or therapy for MS, details the research and trials, gives a risk/cost analysis, an opinion on its usefulness and a conclusion.

No claims are made for any therapy. The book deals purely in hard facts, giving people with MS a guide to the numerous trials conducted in many countries in an effort to find an effective therapy.

Several treatments have been reported to have a positive effect in reducing the frequency of attacks or slowing progression but, according to William Sibley, all experienced neurologists agree that in spite of certain encouraging signs, much more effective treatment is necessary.

Although the exact cause

remains uncertain, progress has been made in understanding triggering factors. One of the most exciting developments has been a dramatic improvement in the ability to measure the activity and progress of MS through magnetic imaging resonance.

The book has nothing about the emotions that go with MS, but I wish it had been available seven years ago; I could have saved myself a lot of disappointment and money if I had known more about the effectiveness of the treatments beforehand.

Isobel Ward

*The Magic Of Movement*, by Laura Mitchell, is published by Age Concern, and subtitled "A Tonic for Older People". It is divided into sections on the various regions of the human liable to need attention: your upper and lower halves, your middle, your mind, your



"I have cerebral palsy."

*Stronger than Superman*, is a "sharp, very funny play" for children over 7, about a 10-year-old Chris who spends his life in a wheelchair. 4 February – 5 March at the Unicorn Theatre for Children, Great Newport Street, London WC2, tel: 01-379 3280. Signed performance on 1 March.

Leon Morris, a regular freelance photographer for *DN*, is the Victoria & Albert

emotions and your spirit. Copies available from Age Concern England, 60 Pitcairn Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3LL. £3.95, inc. post & packing.

*I Have Cerebral Palsy* and *I Have Cystic Fibrosis* are two books from the One World series published by Franklin Watts. Aimed at children from eight years upwards, they look at the everyday lives and experiences of young people with disabilities, mainly through pictures.

Chapters on school, holidays, and a child's early life are followed by fact sheets on the particular disability and glossaries of words used.

Available from all good book shops. £5.95 each.

*Care Guide 88* covers care services and sheltered housing for elderly people in London and the northern Home Counties.

Different housing options are discussed – staying at home, moving into sheltered housing or residential and nursing homes.

The directories of homes and nursing agencies are supplemented by chapters on common medical conditions, money matters, aids to independent living and making the best use of public services.

Available from Laing & Buisson, 1 Perren Street, London NW5 3ED, £4.95.

Museum's first photographer in residence.

An exhibition of his work, including some Heart 'n Soul pictures, will run 1-15 March outside the restaurant. At 3.30pm on 8 and 11 March, in the foyer, there will be a chance to meet him, discuss his work and pick up technical tips. Use the Exhibition Road entrance, SW7. If special parking facilities are needed phone the V&A's chief warden on 01-938 8540.

## TELEVISION

Given my past criticism of BBC disability sports coverage involving Cliff Morgan, it's a pleasure to praise *The Olympic Challenge* (BBC1, 23 December), which he presented.

This hour-long look at the Seoul Paralympics was precisely the sports documentary, rather than human interest programme, that many of us had wanted for some time. It was virtually devoid of sentimentality, concentrating instead on the sport and competition.

Apart from three minor emotive lapses, excellent viewing – much better than the fifteen minutes, out of almost an hour-and-a-half, allocated to the paralympics on *Olympics '88* (ITV, 28 December).

Now that BBC Sport has got it right, can coverage be more frequent and current rather than retrospective?

*Riding The Gale* (C4, 15 December) was made by Australian husband and wife, Kim and Genni Batterham. Extracts from three previous autobiographical films illustrated powerfully Genni's regression due to her multiple sclerosis.

Though still determined to be positive, Genni showed a justifiable anguish, which would have been difficult for many viewers to watch, particularly those with MS. Top marks to Channel 4 for showing it.

The *Everyman* programme *A Drop in the Ocean* (BBC1, 1 January) highlighted Martha House which accommodates severely disabled people. It was about the financial difficulties faced by charities in a competitive field with not enough Government support. Pity no-one questioned residential accommodation.

Having never watched the series *London's Burning* (ITV, 25 December), I don't know whether the disabled son of one of the firemen has featured before, but the character was well acted by a genuine thalidomide youngster. Hopefully, he will reappear in future episodes.

*Billy's Christmas Angels* (BBC1, 23 December) was a weird play which amounted to a build up for Charlie, who appeared briefly at the end, played by Nabil Shaban. Here was ample proof that Nabil can play "nice" characters!

A much bigger role went to a third disabled actor, Bradley Theobald, because the whole plot of *Snap Decision* (ITV, 4 January) revolved around him. The theme of the play was that some disabled people capitalize unfairly on their disability to the detriment of relatives.

Of course this can happen, but given the infrequency of disability in drama, it could have added a new distortion to stereotypes of people with disabilities.

Chris Davies

## Lookout for...

Double Exposure is an integrated theatre company which has a new play *Red is the Colour of the Night* about fantasy and isolation. In spoken text, sign language and music. 2 March at the Towngate Theatre, Basildon and 6-26 March at the Half Moon Theatre, London E1. Box office 01-790 4000. The play will be touring around the

country until the end of April. Ring 01-636 3158 for details. Review in April *DN*.

A workshop for partially sighted people on Miro's paintings is to be held at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, Whitechapel High St, London E1 on 14 April. It is free and there will also be an opportunity to make a sculpture. If you would like to go, phone Fiona Furness on 01-377 5015.



"Being an avid fan of *Coronation Street*, I was looking forward to my visit with *Woman's Own* to the world of television in Manchester.

My weekend turned to misery as my hotel bedroom was broken into and I was woken up around 3am by two young men. They stole my purse, credit card and camera, as well as all my photographs of the *Street*.

Knowing me, and being a sociable person, perhaps I had spoken to them during the evening, so they may have taken advantage of my disability.

What causes me more concern, though, is that they have left me mentally and emotionally scared. Even today, some months later, I can still visualise them running out of my hotel bedroom as I switched on the bedside lamp.

My bedroom was on the ground floor next to the kitchen, not specially adapted for a disabled person, though I do use a wheelchair. I had locked the bedroom door, so I don't know how they got in.

Please will you advise me how to get over this problem?

I do understand how upset you must have been, and still are, by the break-in.

I wonder if you have had opportunities to talk things over with a skilled counsellor or with someone who has had similar experiences? It is important to find a listener who appreciates just how vulnerable you feel and understands that you need to go over the details many times before you can get that awful night out of your system.

In many areas there is a Victims' Support Group, where

# Share Your Problems

with Margaret Morgan

## Healing scars and preventing personal attacks



people who have had similar experiences are available to listen and to help you. Details should be in your telephone directory but, if not, try ringing your local Citizens' Advice Bureau or the Samaritans.

Do try to find someone sympathetic who doesn't mind how many times you go over the same story. It really *does* help to talk about your fears openly.

If you want to be better prepared in the future you should, perhaps, be a bit more careful what you say to strangers.

There are courses in self-defence, but if an assailant is determined to mug you, you could be badly hurt.

Better, perhaps, to buy yourself a personal alarm (around £5 from big department stores) which might frighten a mugger away. There is even a personal bleeper alarm that can be used as a torch or as a burglar alarm at home: you hang it on the inside of a door and the alarm goes off if the door is opened (Jags' Three-in-One Body and Home Alarm, about £6.95). The Disabled Living Foundation holds a list of personal alarms with different switches; some can be attached to wheelchairs.

If you would like advice about security in your home or when out-of-doors, do phone your local police station and ask for

the security officer. He or she will probably visit your home to look at the doors and windows and then give you some practical tips.

For those who are unfortunate enough to get injured in a personal attack, compensation may well be available from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

It is important to note that the victim does not have to be injured by an unknown assailant. Family violence and assaults by people known to the victim are included.

The CICB has a very comprehensive leaflet explaining who is eligible and how to apply.

I do hope that by now you are getting over the shock and loss of your possessions. Be patient: it takes time.

"I am a member of staff in a small group home for young adults with learning difficulties. We are trying to encourage these young men and women to be more independent and several of them are now very capable and can run their own lives with minimum supervision.

We did, however, have a set-back recently, as one of the young men was mugged on his way back from shopping - in daylight - and his money was stolen. He was

very shocked and shaken by this experience and, understandably, does not want to go out on his own.

We have discussed the situation amongst the residents and staff, but I wondered if you had any advice to give us?"

This is a difficult dilemma and it really comes down to acceptable levels of risk-taking, doesn't it?

Much of the reply to my first correspondent is relevant and I do hope the young man has had opportunities to express, in his own way, his fears and anxieties. It may well be that he will regain his confidence and feel able to go out alone in well-populated streets during daylight hours.

I expect your employing agency, whether statutory or voluntary, will have guidelines about risk-taking and so it will be a question of working out together a sensible balance of encouraging independence and safeguarding the health and well-being of residents.

It is important to accept, however, that it may take this young man a very long time to regain his confidence and he just may not want to go out on his own again. Perhaps a friend could go with him?

*Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, Whittington House, 19 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7LG, tel: 01-636 9501.*

*The Women's Support Project in Glasgow produces material on domestic and other violence (see DN January 1989, page 17). Contact Pauline Bell at Newlands Centre, 871 Spring Field Road, Glasgow G31 4H9, tel: 041-554 5667.*

*Disabled Living Foundation, 380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU, tel: 01-289 6111.*

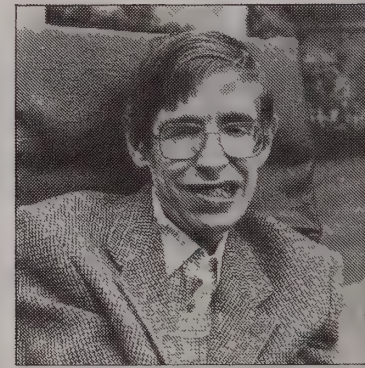
## PROFILE

### Professor Stephen Hawking

Professor Stephen Hawking, whose book *A Brief History of Time* was published last June and took the bestseller charts by storm, suffers from motor-neuron disease. Still in his 40s, he has lost the power both of speech and of most movement.

In written answers to *DN's* questions, Professor Hawking said that the book had done "five times what I expected." His area of study has been theoretical mathematics, and the book traces the development of science - how we discovered the movement of the planets etc - up to the present day.

"One can manage to explore the universe in one's mind, even if one is limited in one's physical movements," he says. "Not that I can complain: I went abroad six times last year."



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Academic excellence and pioneering work has brought Professor Hawking international renown. He has been compared to Sir Isaac Newton, whose seat in Cambridge University's department of applied mathematics and theoretical physics he now fills.

"I'm lucky," he says, "to be sufficiently successful that people treat me as a scientist rather than a disabled person. But the main regret I have is that my disability does not let me play with my children as much as I would like.

"I think people who are physically handicapped should concentrate on things of the mind. I don't think they need to be encouraged to go into further education, but they should be helped with the difficulties and obstacles that are in the way.

After 28 weeks in the *Sunday Times* bestseller lists, selling over 200,000 copies in the UK, Professor Hawking has received substantial royalties for his work. "I don't know what I will do with the money" he says, but if it were a question of government spending, access to cinemas and theatres would rank high on his list of priorities.

Asked whether he thought his example might encourage more people to become academics, Professor Hawking replied "I hope it will encourage more understanding and respect for science."

David Nicholson

*A Brief History of Time, from Bantam Press, price £14.95.*

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## INFO

**Radio Oxford Narrowboat Trust** has launched a 70-foot narrowboat to give trips and holidays to disabled children and young people on the Oxford canal and the Thames. The boat features purpose-built facilities such as a wheelchair lift and wide gangways. Bookings are taken for trips lasting from a few hours to a few days, with or without skipper. Self-help groups, special schools, children's homes, families and voluntary organisations are welcome. Contact Mark Saville, co-ordinator, Ormerod School, Waynflete Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 8DD, tel: (0865) 61501.

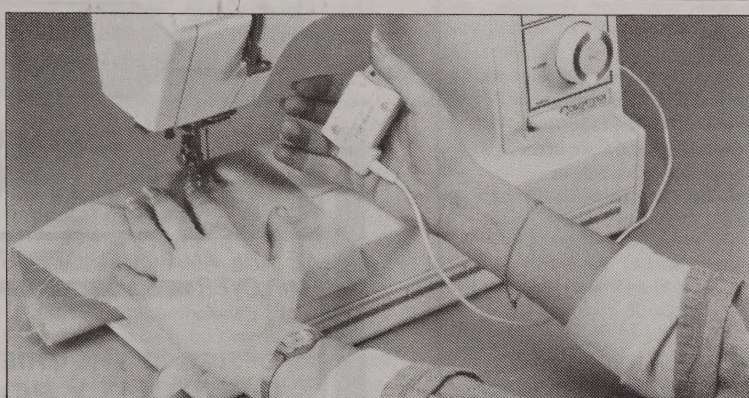
The **C.P. Sport Society** publishes its first *Report* newspaper this month. Also appearing is *Cerebral Palsy Sport Handbook 1989*, giving details of 21 years of C.P. Sport and coverage of the 1988 Seoul Olympics. *Report* aims to provide events and equipment information and news. The first edition covers the formation of the British Paralympic Association, hang-gliding, and a diary of events for the first six months of 1989. Costing £5 a year for individuals, £10 for groups and £15 for organisations, *Report* is available from Howard Bailey, The Spastics Society, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5QH, tel: 01-387 9571 ext 214.

**Live Music Now**, a scheme founded by Sir Yehudi Menuhin, is looking for disabled musicians to audition for a series of forthcoming concerts. Applications are invited from individuals or small groups (up to five players) on any instrument, whether "violin, sitar, piano, bagpipe, ukelele, accordion or steel drum." Details and application forms from Live Music Now, 38 Wigmore Street, London W1H 9DF, tel: 01 486 7333.

**Sense**, the National Deaf-Blind and Rubella Association, have launched a new video - *Keeping in Touch*. Sponsored by British Telecom, it shows how speech and sign language can be adapted to touch methods for people who lose their sight as a result of Usher Syndrome and other causes. Available from Sense, 311 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8PT, tel: 01 278 1005. Price £25.

**Isis Audio Books Tape Library** and **The Talking Books Library** both announce new publications this month. Isis have developed a mail order library, including books by Spike Milligan, Tom Sharpe and Christopher Nolan.

Talking Books, meanwhile, have added 122 new books to their catalogue. They also have a new tape-player for loan which changes sides automatically. Adding to the present 700 titles, they have poetry from T.S. Eliot, novels from Virginia Woolf and Evelyn Waugh, stories from Roald Dahl, and hanky-panky from Barbara Cartland.



## WHAT'S ON

**Lifting, Moving, Handling half-day workshop**, 27 February. A practical/demonstration session aimed at carers. Professional instruction on how to lift or move people with disabilities safely. 2 - 4.30pm. £5. Nottingham Resource Centre for the Disabled, Lenton Business Centre, Lenton Boulevard, Nottingham NG7 2BY. Details from Sue Brown or Denise Des Forges, tel: (0602) 420391.

**New Developments in Technology and Disability**, 8 March. A one day course for people concerned with special needs education at the Further Education Development Centre, Bolton Institute of Higher Education, Chadwick Street, Bolton BL2 1JW. Reg O'Brien, Conference Organiser, tel: (0204) 28851 ext 3216/3292.

**Last on the List**. An analysis of community services available for people with physical disabilities, 17 March. A lunch-time seminar led by Virginia Beardshaw, at the King's Fund Centre for Health Services Development, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NF. Contact Susan Hodge, tel: 01-267 6111 ext 210.

**The Use of Art, Music and Educational Drama with Speech and Language Impaired Children**, 22 February. 9.30am - 4.30pm at Nottingham University. £25 per person. Information from Steve Bates, Training and Conference Administrator, Invalid Children's Aid Nationwide, 198 City Road, London EC1V 2PH, tel: 01-608 2462.

**Danceability. A Forum for the South East**, 13 & 14 April. Practical workshops and discussion groups on the subject of dance and disability at Surrey University. To contribute to the information manual, or for details, contact Chris Eatwell, Artability Office, St James Centre, Quarry Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2EY.

**Robin Hood International Games** for people with cerebral palsy, 20 - 30 July. International Games, Exhibition of Games and Equipment, Classification Workshop, Boccia Symposium and Recreation Conference/Course. For full details write to Robin Hood International Games, Cerebral Palsy Sport, The Spastics Society, General Hospital, Park Road, Nottingham NG1 6HA.

**Residential Summer Schools for blind and partially sighted adults**. Courses on archaeology, natural history, science and technology, horticulture, medieval studies and literature and the arts at Bristol University. Application forms available now. Contact Claire Wickham or Nicola Hockin, Department of Extra-mural Studies, Wills Memorial Building, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1HR. Tel: (0272) 303030 ext 4638.

**Southern Arts** are organising readings for disabled groups from 1-3 February by Antonia Howard and Humphrey Carpenter. Ring Miranda McKearney on (0962) 65102.

## CHECKOUT

If one of your New Year resolutions was to take up a hobby, we feature two new products this month which might make it easier. But if your idea of relaxation is watching TV, our other product is a unique way of checking who callers are, without moving from your chair.

**The Armchair Special** is the world's first potter's wheel for people in wheelchairs. Anyone with limited use of both arms will be able to use it and no back movement is necessary. A "strong arm" attachment reduces the level of strength and co-ordination needed, so would-be potters can throw pots without

the agonising delay of learning how to centre the clay. £545 (no VAT for registered disabled users) for the wheel, £36 for the strong arm. Potters' Mate, (078723) 7704.

After many requests and a year's research, the parent company of New Home Sewing Machines has developed a **hand held controller** which fits snugly into the palm of the hand and needs pressure from only one finger to operate the variable speed control. It replaces the foot controller, so no machine adaptation is needed. At around £25, the controller is suitable for the Memory Craft models 5500, 6000, 7000 and 2122. Contact Irvine Armstrong, on 061-430 6011.

**Domesticam** (below left) is a door camera surveillance system which works through any domestic TV set. When the door bell rings, you simply switch to a pre-tuned channel and can see who is there. Then you can answer the door confidently. No special wiring or modification to the TV is needed. £379 plus VAT and fitting (£25-£75) within the month. One camera could serve a block of flats, so if you can persuade your neighbours to join in, the cost would tumble. Dawneasy Ltd, 58 Templar Rd, North Yale, Bristol, tel: (0454) 316569.



### Courses at Castle Priory

**Counselling and the Visually Impaired**, 1 - 3 March. For staff, volunteers and visually handicapped people. Organised with the RNIB. **Family Placement and Special Needs**, 13 - 15 March. Workshop based on recent research published by British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF).

**Basic Motor Pattern**, 31 March - 2 April. Treatment planning and skill development for children who have cerebral palsy. Tutor Ester Cotton.

**Rehabilitation of Children and Young People with Severe Head Injuries**, 3 - 5 April. For teachers, care and paramedical staff in schools and community services.

*Fees: Tuition £75. Residence £49. Non-residence £20. Further information from Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallington, Oxon OX10 0HE. Please enclose SAE. Tel: (0491) 37551.*

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## HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT AND FIELDWORK

We are looking for someone to be responsible for the development of GLAD policies and fieldwork, the provision of support and advice to our members and fostering of collaboration within the disability field in London. S/he will manage a team of five staff and take part in GLAD's management. S/he must have an excellent understanding and

awareness of disability issues and experience of working with disability organisations. S/he must have experience of living and/or working in a multi-cultural environment and an awareness of the problems facing racial and cultural minorities. S/he must be able to work well with individuals and groups. Some experience of managing staff, initiating projects, and social policy development is essential. Salary: NJC Scale PO1 £14,997-£16,059 p.a. (including London weighting).

Closing date for applications: 17th February 1989. Further details and application form (available on tape and floppy diskette) from: Greater London Association For Disabled People, 336 Brixton Rd, London SW9 7AA. Tel: 01-274 0107.

We are working towards becoming an equal opportunities employer and we particularly wish to encourage applications from people from black and ethnic minority groups. GLAD posts are open to all, but disabled people are currently under represented at senior management level so preference will be given to disabled people who meet all the essential requirements for the post. Our offices are fully accessible and we will make every effort to provide for individual needs.

Section 38(1)(b) Race Relations Act 1976 applies to this post. Glad receives funding from the London Boroughs Grants Scheme.

## Integration, Independence and Equality

### POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

(SOCIAL SERVICES)

£11,934 - £13,887 plus London weighting

Issues in Social Services are amongst our primary concerns. We're now looking for an experienced policy specialist with a thorough understanding of such issues, particularly as they relate to people with disabilities.

You should have experience in social policy and relevant legislation, which may have been developed in Local

Government and/or the Voluntary Sector. However you need not necessarily be a qualified Social Worker.

In addition to monitoring and advising the team on matters such as independent living and Care in the Community, you will also play an active role in promoting the Team's activities London-wide. Strong communication skills are therefore a necessity.

### CLERICAL ASSISTANT

£6,918 - £8,091 plus London weighting

Among our most important initiatives are Taping, Braille and Sign Language Services. Providing general clerical support to this unit, your duties will include liaising with and booking freelance readers and sign language interpreters. We will train you to operate our computerised text-to-braille facility. Needless to say you will have good word processing and

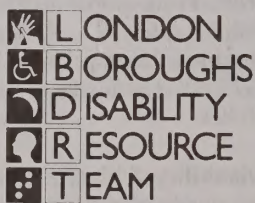
communication skills. Proven organisational abilities will ensure the filing and record systems for taping and braille services are well maintained.

You'll be surprised at how involved you'll become in the valuable work of this team, developing new skills while making a worthwhile contribution to the lives of people with disabilities.

It is essential that you have a proven commitment to equal opportunities and display an understanding of the needs and expectations of other disadvantaged groups within society. Funded by eleven London Boroughs, we provide a range of services to assist local authorities in their work and provision for disabled people.

We are currently based at County Hall, but will soon be relocating to another Central London location.

For application forms and further details please contact LBDRT, Room 95, The County Hall, London SE1 7PB or telephone 01-633 3473 (24 hour answerphone). Closing date for both posts: 13th February 1989. The particular needs of people with disabilities, women, lesbians and gay men or people from ethnic minorities constitute an important focus for our work. Applications are encouraged from people with disabilities from these groups and from people with disabilities generally. These posts are open to job sharing.



### CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT

The London Borough of Waltham Forest wishes to appoint a disabled person as an Access Development Worker, to be located in the Chief Executive's Department. Two job-sharing Access Design Officers, based with the Architects in the Department of Development, have recently been appointed to work on the design and implementation of access facilities. It is expected that the Access Design Officers and the Access Development Worker will work closely together to develop better access facilities in Waltham Forest.

### ACCESS DEVELOPMENT WORKER

£15,015 - £16,254 p.a. inc.

You will work closely with people with disabilities on access issues. By increasing awareness of the needs, rights and wishes of people with disabilities, you will promote the creation of an accessible environment in which people with disabilities are able to play a full and active part. You will work to increase the direct participation of people with disabilities in access and planning issues and to enable Council Officers to consult directly with people with disabilities.

Although a member of the Chief Executive's Department, you will be based mainly at the Disability Resource Centre, in the office of the Waltham Forest Association for People with Disabilities. It is expected that this arrangement will facilitate direct contact with people with disabilities and their organisations in Waltham Forest. A major task will be to establish and develop a local Access Group (a group of people with a professional and personal interest in improving access for people with disabilities).

You will need to have an awareness of issues relating to disability and a commitment to enabling people with disabilities to assume an independent role in society. Although a technical background is not necessary, knowledge of access issues and the relevant technical legislation is essential. You will need to demonstrate good organisation skills as well as an ability to undertake development work.

You must show understanding of the importance of good access for the successful implementation of policies designed to promote equal opportunities.

CLOSING DATE: 24.2.89

REF: H2437/DN

Applications are restricted to candidates having a physical sensory or learning disability (registered or unregistered).

Application form and further details from the Recruitment Officer, Personnel Department, Town Hall, Forest Road, London E17 4JF (tel. 01-531 8899 - 24 hour Answering Service).

Waltham Forest is a multi-racial area and we are anxious to ensure this is reflected in our workforce. All applications for jobs are considered on merit with equal opportunities for women, black and ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities.

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF

Waltham Forest

**LAMBETH**  
SERVICES WELL WORTH DEFENDING

### Rates/Housing Benefit Co-ordinator

£12,327-£13,059 pa inc.

Applicants must have experience of computerised systems, including investigating reconciliation, and experience of work in a multi-racial unionised environment. Knowledge of rating and Housing Benefit legislation are essential as is the ability to communicate with sensitivity and consideration. An understanding of the principles of the Equal Opportunity Policy, the willingness and commitment to implement it, and ability to provide an effective service to a multi-racial clientele is essential. Ref. F50.\*

Application forms obtainable from the Personnel Officer, Directorate of Finance, London Borough of Lambeth, 18 Brixton Hill, London SW2. Tel: 01-274 7711 ext 2534. Closing date: 6th February 1989.

Always quote the appropriate reference number.

\*Post suitable for job sharing.

As part of the Council's equal opportunity employment policy applications are invited from people regardless of race, creed, nationality, disability, age, sex, or responsibility for children or dependants and from lesbians and gay men.

**Well worth working for.**

**KIRKLEES**  
METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

WE ARE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER *West Yorkshire*

### OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE DISABILITY POLICY OFFICER

Post No: 300583

Salary: £11,934 to £12,729 p.a. (SO1)

Kirklees Equal Opportunities Unit wishes to employ a disabled person as part of a team dedicated to promoting equal opportunities for disabled people. The section particularly wishes to ensure that issues concerning black disabled women receive a high priority.

Knowledge and experience of issues affecting disabled people, women and the black and ethnic minority community would be an advantage. This could be gained via community organisations, paid or unpaid work and direct personal experience.

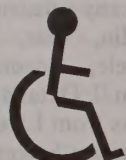
You will be working with disability and community organisations and within the Council on a wide range of areas and you should actively support all equal opportunities issues.

Appropriate training and support for carrying out all duties will be provided.

Only disabled people need apply as this post is being advertised under the provisions of the disabled Persons Employment Act. Black and ethnic minority disabled people are particularly encouraged to apply, (under Section 38 (1)(b) of the race Relations Act) because of underrepresentation in the Authority.

Contact Common Services Section, Kirklees House, Market Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2TG. Telephone Huddersfield 22133 ext. 2279 for further information and an application form, (also available in braille, large print or on tape). Closing date 28 Feb 1989. Job sharers are welcome.

The Council operates a Trade Union Membership Agreement



KIRKLEES OPERATES AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY  
FULL DETAILS OF WHICH WILL BE SUPPLIED TO ALL APPLICANTS

## ARTS ACCESS

The Arts Access Unit of the Arts Council's Planning Department is responsible for the development, maintenance and monitoring of programmes of activity and projects to further the non-art-form policies of the Arts Council. Present policies are those relating to Ethnic Minority Arts and Arts and Disability; further initiatives on other equal opportunity policy matters are to be developed.

### Assistant Planning Officers (Arts Access) - 2 posts

These Officers will play a crucial part in the small Unit and will assist in all aspects of its work; one post relates, but not exclusively, to the Council's Ethnic Minority Arts Action Plan, the other to the Code of Practice on Arts and Disability.

Salary on a scale from £10,324 pa to £12,744 pa.

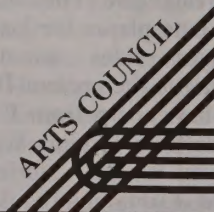
Good communication skills (spoken and written), commitment, and an ability to work with energy and initiative as part of a busy team are more important than formal qualifications.

For an application form and job description, please contact the Personnel Department, Arts Council, 105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AU. Tel. 01-629 9495 ext 266.

Please indicate any preference of policy area if applicable.

Closing date for receipt of applications Thursday 16 February.

The Arts Council welcomes applications from all sections of the Community regardless of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, marital status, sex, sexual orientations, disability or religious beliefs.





**FOR SALE**

**1988 Chairman Astra 1.3**, 6,500 miles. Full fitting for wheelchair, excellent condition. Nordic blue. Phone Evesham (0386) 48600. £8,250.

**Send today for FREE brochure** showing the new and unique FRESHOLD BODIPOD attachment for binoculars and cameras. Weighs just 500 grams yet takes all the strain off even the strongest arms! As tested by Bill Oddie. Write or phone: Optical Division (Dept 28) IN COURT SPORTS LIMITED, FREEPOST, PO Box 28, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 6XB. Tel: (02912) 71184.

**BEC electric wheelchair**, battery charger and cape. As new – 2 years old. Was £1,050, will accept £750 ono. Tel: Nuneaton (0203) 347237 or 384757.

**Elva Twin Special Scooter**. New, under guarantee. Battery charger and cover. Cost £1,775, sell £995. Details 01-509 0006.

**Pullman HTES Motor Home**. "Designed with disabled in mind". New conversion. 2500cc diesel, 5 speed, 1987 (Nov). Wheelchair ramp, camping rails, 2 cubic ft fridge, hot/cold water, shower etc. Immaculate throughout. £10,425. Tel: Leisure Vehicles (0246) 851454.

**FREE 3 year old Fred Brooks Stairlift**, fold up seat, 11 treads & 2nd section, 4 treads also available. Safety features. NW London. Tel: 01-455 5058.

**Flexistand Major Standing Frame**, £100. Elap Rotating Car Seat for Renault, £150. Phone 01-857 3371.

**Everest & Jennings Runaround Scooter**, 14 months old, excellent condition, just serviced, £1,000 ono. Tel: (042 771) 371.

**BEC Superscooter**. Excellent condition with new batteries. £500. Tel: 01-546 1676.

*Disability Now is not responsible for claims made in the advertisements it prints and all readers are advised to check claims with the advertiser before relying on them.*

**Electric Tricycle** purchased new 1986. 3 speed derailleur gear, 12 volt battery & charger and other accessories, £450. Box No 33.

**Carter Electric Wheelchair** with kerb-climbers. Recently serviced with new batteries. Good condition. £500. **Stannah Stairlift** left hand, straight track, 13 stairs. Serviced regularly. Good condition. £850. Tel: Brighton (0273) 693327.

**Vessa Electric Wheelchair** in good condition. New batteries. £250. Beyton, Suffolk (0359) 70165.

**Brotherwood Conversions** have for sale a range of second hand converted vehicles for transporting the wheelchair bound, from £3,500. For a detailed list please phone (0935) 872603 or send SAE, Brotherwood Conversions, Station Garage, Yetminster, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 6LH.

We build electrically assisted tricycles (and bicycles) easy to ride. Road legal. No license required. "Electric specials" also designed and built. Broadway Mobility, Unit 9, The Arches, Sherwood Road, South Harrow, Middlesex HA2 8AU. 01-423 0641.

**Sliding Car Seat** plus detachable head and arm rests, suitable driver or passenger, by D R Hodge. Fit most cars. Easily installed. £100 ono. Tel: Hatfield (07072) 63463.

**Meyra electric wheelchair** model 3422, 6 years old, needs new batteries. £800 ono. Tel: Chorleywood (092 78) 4463.

**One electric wheelchair Vessa Vitesse** with joy sticks hand control. 2 years old but unused. Price as new £2,000, offered at £1,000 ono. Phone: (0767) 80831 during office hours.

**Vauxhall Cavalier 1600L**, saloon, automatic, PAS, silver/blue metallic, August 1985, 16,000 miles, joy-stick steering for use with left hand, Feeny & Johnson vacuum brake and accelerator for use with right hand, electronic front windows, £12,000 ono. Phone: Oxford (0865) 772519.

**RHC Vessa Vitesse** powered wheelchair. Excellent condition, rarely used, new battery, £750 ono. Tel: 01-723 7616 for viewing/try-out.

**Turbo Wheelchairs**. Reconditioned 2nd hand Turbo Wheelchairs available at £1,950 plus seat fitting/battery costs.

Ideal for users up to 8 stone for indoors and outdoors. Seat elevates from floor to table height. Joystick or single switch operation available. Tel Joyce on (0223) 243336.

**Caravan Abbey 415 GT tourer** 1980, w/ch conversion, double glazed, heater, fridge, mains electrics, many extras £1,950. Tel: (0782) 334863.

**Electric wheelchairs/scooters/battery cars**. All makes, models wanted and for sale. Nearly new, hardly used from half price. Demonstrations and collections. Free advice. All areas. Contact Mr Gibbon. Tel: 021-357 4965 anytime.

**Adjustable kitchen sink**, right hand drainer. Handle to lower for wheelchair user. Flexible feed waste system. 16 months old. New £500, only £250. Tel: St Austell (0726) 74262.

**WANTED**

**The Greater Manchester Appeals Team** of The Spastics Society is looking for part-time people to recruit collectors for forthcoming house to house collections. Applicants must have their own phone and be willing to work evenings/week-ends. Clear hand-writing and good telephone manner essential. Commission paid and telephone expenses. Full training given. Contact Gina Dowding 061-736 9850.

**SCOPE** is a registered charity which provides disabled people in London with alternative therapies. Could you help our appeal to raise funds to treat more disabled people? Donations to SCOPE, 10 Coney Acre, Croxted Road, West Dulwich, London SE21 8LL. Tel: 01-761 3597.

**TUITION**

**Qualified speech therapist**, varied experiences, some knowledge of conductive education, private help available to children in London area. For further information please contact Caroline Poole 01-727 9551.

**Bobath Day Courses** for teachers working with children who have cerebral palsy. (1) Integrating the young child with Cerebral Palsy into the normal classroom, Monday 6 March 1989, 9am-5pm. Course fee £30; (2) The Child with multiple handicaps in School, Tuesday 7 March 1989, 9am-5pm. Course fee £30. Both courses will include lectures and demonstrations. Programmes are available from the Bobath Centre, 5 Netherhall Gardens, London NW3 5RN or tel: 01-435 3895. A list of accommodation near the centre can be supplied.

If you would like DN on tape contact Gayle Mooney on 01-636 5020 ext 244.

**FIND A FRIEND**

**Christian widow** from Norfolk, 62, disabled – interests include Gospel music, homelife, holidays, christian fellowship, seeks penfriends, male or female. Box No 34.

**Wheelchair mobile male Californian student** (in England) would like penfriend aged 10 – 21. Interests are horses, computers, watersports and watching ice-hockey & roller-hockey (I'd like to play wheelchair-hockey). Also enjoys languages, travel and reading (science fantasy and adventure.) Box No 35.

**Disabled man 29**, seeks girl 20 – 30. My interests are going out to concerts, clubs and on holidays. I am waiting to hear from you and am prepared to travel to meet you. Box No 36.

**Widower 69** lonely, using wheelchair otherwise very active. Animal lover, own bungalow on sea front, car and motor caravan – seeks lady 55+, no ties, non smoker, vehicle driver for companionship

**Advertise in DN...**

... and reach over 80,000 people for just £2 a line (minimum £8). Please don't send money with your ad – we will invoice you after it goes in. Find a Friend is free, and all ads are free to members of The Spastics Society and affiliated groups. Phone 01-636 5020 ext 245, or 01-252 1362 for larger boxed ads.

and holidays. Box No 37.

**41 year old lady** who enjoys music (Jim Reeves), reading and animals would like male penfriend. Please use large print. Box No 38.

To reply to a Find-a-Friend advert, indicate the Box Number clearly, mark the envelope Private & Confidential and send it to Disability Now, address on page 16.

**134 Project**

**2 Project Workers (Full-time)**  
**1 Project Worker (Part-time, 20 hours)**

£11,058 including London Weighting  
£5,529 (part-time) including London Weighting

The 134 Project is a resettlement project based in Lambeth offering supported accommodation for women and men released from prison.

Many of our residents are black, so it is essential that you can work in an anti-racist way. The project is aiming to respond to the needs of lesbians and gay men.

The post will involve work with residents to assist them with resettlement into permanent housing and will also involve basic housing management.

We are looking for people with experience of:

– a working style which encourages residents to develop their own skills

– working in a multi-racial team

– implementing Equal Opportunities Policies

Training will be provided if needed.

We welcome applications from people who wish to job-share.

**For application forms please send S.A.E. to:**

**The Administrator, 134 Project, Second Floor, 32 Brixton Road, London SW9 6BU (PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER YOU ARE APPLYING FOR A FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME POST).**

The 134 Project is a resettlement project of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders.

We regret that, at present, we do not have wheelchair access to any of our properties.

**The closing date for applications is 18 February, 1989.**

# NACRO

NACRO aims to be an equal opportunities employer and to eliminate unfair discrimination against anyone in its selection process.

**for the care of offenders and prevention of crime**

## Carousel

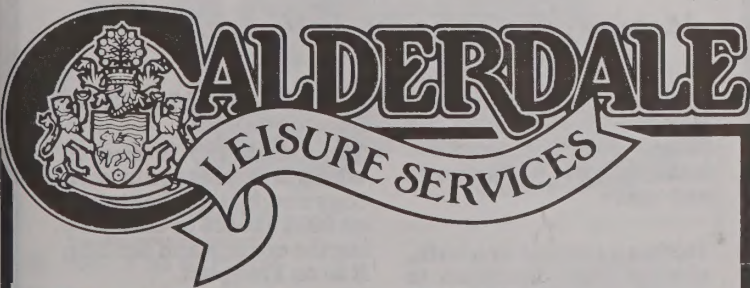
CAROUSEL – and exciting arts project working with people who have learning difficulties has a vacancy for a full-time experienced ADMINISTRATOR AND P.R. WORKER to join the collective.

The project is concerned with creative arts workshops, staff training, performance, exhibitions and residencies.

People with disabilities are particularly encouraged to apply. No wheelchair access but ground floor office – 3 steps.

Wage: £10,436.00 p.a. Closing date: 1.3.89.

Send for details: Carousel, 2 St Georges Place, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 4GB. Tel: (0273) 570840.



### Sports Development Officer For People with Disabilities

Scale 5 £9,474 – £10,407

Our newly created Sports Development Unit is committed to integrating persons with disabilities into their local sporting community.

As the Development Officer, you will play a leading role in developing policies and new initiatives to meet this objective. When you join our small but effective team, you will work with people across a broad spectrum of disabilities and liaise with various governing bodies, so you should have some experience in these areas. You will also need a proven track record of organisational ability and be enthusiastic and self motivated.

This is a readvertisement and we will automatically consider existing applications. The position is open to both disabled and able-bodied persons. Interviews will be held on Wednesday 22nd February 1989.

To apply, please contact The Director of Leisure Services, Metropolitan Borough Council of Calderdale, Wellesley Park, Gibbet Street, Halifax HX2 0AY. Closing date for applications Monday 6th February 1989.

This Council is committed to being an equal opportunities employer and service provider.

cut this coupon out and send it to us and we'll send you a copy of our vacancy bulletin

Hackney Council employs a vast range of people with a variety of skills. And we need additional staff in all areas of the organisation so that we can continue to improve the services we provide for local people. We have regular vacancies for staff in each department, from Social Services to Finance, and work opportunities range from managerial and technical staff to administrators clerical workers and qualified professionals. If you are interested in finding out more about a career with one of the most innovative Local Councils in the capital, complete the coupon and we will send you a copy of our weekly vacancy bulletin which contains details of all jobs available and how to apply.

Hackney is serious about Equal Opportunities. All applications for jobs are considered on merit, with equal opportunities for women, black and ethnic minorities, lesbians and gay men and people with disabilities. Job share applications are welcomed with or without a partner.

Drop into our job shop at the Town Hall and look around or return the coupon, to: The Recruitment Office, Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA or telephone 01-986 3123 ext 211 or 215.

Please send me your weekly vacancy bulletin

Name .....

Address .....

Ref: DN2



**HACKNEY COUNCIL**  
**Working for local people**



First national daily paper for blind?

Focus, the first daily national talking newspaper for blind people and others with reading difficulties, hopes to launch this year. Based in Gateshead, the taped paper has already run for 18 months to a local listenership of 500 a day. An hour long, it includes one side of hard news, information and comment, and a side of features. Financed by Gateshead Metropolitan Council, the paper has attracted further sponsorship from 25 local authorities and will be distributed free by the Post Office. "Everyone pays for local library services," said Focus director Katherine Bowman, who is blind herself, "even though many disabled people are unable to take

advantage of them. There should be an alternative service." She predicts that the tape will appeal to a much wider audience than visually handicapped people: "It may help illiterate people, dyslexics, or anyone who is print denied, such as many for whom English is a second language." Focus collects material from regular papers and magazines, but also has access to press agency reports via Tyne Tees TV. They are aiming at a 22,000 copies per day output, based on estimates of 1.7 million blind or visually handicapped adults, along with nearly two million print denied. Sixty-three people work full or part-time for the paper, 80 per cent of whom are disabled. They

have around £500,000 worth of recording equipment at their disposal. "We aren't limited to a simple daily edition," added Katherine Bowman. "Often there are crime prevention specials, benefits news and broadcasts from locations around the country." Talking Newspapers UK, who produce a similar service of 10,000 copies a week, say that a target of 22,000 a day is unrealistic. "They need machines not yet invented," said company chairman Ted Davies. "They've been talking about a national edition for 18 months, but it'll never get further than the papers who print articles about it." Focus supervisor Alan Matthews replied that 22,000 copies will be "no problem." He quotes music companies such as EMI turning out 500,000 a day, and says "the team's qualifications as sound engineers will make it easy to speed up production and increase quantity."



Four-year-old Alicia Leston-Rama was paralysed from the neck down after a road accident. But after two years on a life-support machine with round-the-clock care, she now attends school one day a week and is expected to start full-time later this year. Her parents have raised £32,000 towards the extra costs there will be when Alicia finally goes home and South Glamorgan health authority is going to pay £100,000 annually.

HARRY KERR

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☐ Overseas £10 (Sterling)

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☐ A donation towards costs £ \_\_\_\_\_

I authorise you to charge my ☐ VISA ☐ ACCESS

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

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Return to Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ, not to your Bank.

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To the Manager \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Bank)

at \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay to the account of The Spastics Society (12729280) National Westminster Bank Plc, Euston Centre Branch (60:50:03) London NW1 3BA the sum of

£ \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ Amount in words)

on \_\_\_\_\_ 198 \_\_\_\_\_ and thereafter on the same day each year until further notice.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

FOR BANK USE ONLY  
QUOTE REF.  
DN \_\_\_\_\_

Please ensure that all parts of the form are completed and any alterations initialled. Disability Now is a non-profit publication. Receipts on request. Sorry, no refunds.

International special needs Centre

A new international centre for information and the study of special needs education was launched last month. The aim is to build up both a national and international database on all aspects of special needs education for professionals and parents from the UK and overseas. Professor Stanley Segal, former Professor of Special Education at Bulmershe College, is Honorary Director of the Centre. He said professionals in a particular field very often did not know what others in the field were doing and needed a point of reference. "Vast amounts of guidance are available but are not being effectively utilised," he said. The centre will start modestly with a switchboard and leaflets

giving references and contacts. But in two years it hopes to have its own data base. The Department of Education and Science and the British Council are being approached for funds. Patrick Daunt, acting chairperson, said: "We are on a voluntary basis at the moment but we will be asking for donations and grants from the public and businesses. We will also be running some fee-paying courses." He admitted that uncertainty over funding would affect the speed of the Centre's development. While the Royal National Institute for the Blind and The

Spastics Society are among the charities represented on the steering committee there are no organisations run by disabled people. But Patrick Daunt said this is because most of the early work will be with children who have special needs. "When we get into adult education, it will be essential to involve disabled people," he said. Professor Segal said the steering committee has had enthusiastic responses from existing databases and that it was already building up an international core of honorary consultants. The Centre will be based at London University's Institute of Education.

**Disability Now**

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Making life easier for you!

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